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from the Rev^d Ch: Gutzlaff
to Thomas Hunter - 1840

SKETCH
OF
CHINESE HISTORY,
ANCIENT AND MODERN:

*The Alexander
from
Thomas Hunter
Victoria
May 1849*

COMPRISING
A RETROSPECT OF THE FOREIGN INTERCOURSE
AND TRADE WITH
CHINA.

Illustrated by a new and corrected Map of the Empire.

BY THE
REV. CHARLES GUTZLAFF,
NOW, AND FOR MANY YEARS PAST, RESIDENT IN THAT COUNTRY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL,
BOOKSELLERS TO THEIR MAJESTIES.

1834.

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SKETCH
OF
CHINESE HISTORY.

BY
JOHN EDGAR SNOW.

A COMPANION TO THE
CHINESE HISTORY.

Bayerische
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München

1857

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
CHARLES GRANT, M. P.,

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL, &c. &c.

SIR,

Permit me to dedicate to you the following work, the merits or defects of which your studies, and the advantages of your position, ^{may} enable you to appreciate or detect with peculiar accuracy. As you have, moreover, always taken a deep interest in the important trade with China, (the success of which it is the aim of my humble labours to promote,) I know of no public man to whom these volumes can be more appropriately dedicated.

I am, sir,

With sincere respect,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

CHARLES GUTZLAFF.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

CHARLES GRANT, M.P.

MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

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following work, the rights or duties of which
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I am, Sir,

With sincere respect,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

W. CHARLES GRANT, M.P.

ADVERTISEMENT.

CHINA is daily becoming more and more an object of interest and curiosity to European nations, in proportion as commerce, the forerunner, if not the cause, of all improvement in the arts of civilization, discloses its resources, and sheds new light on the character and intellectual cultivation of its inhabitants. Hitherto, the remoteness of its situation with respect to Britain, and the rude, inhospitable nature of its policy towards strangers, have concurred in perpetuating the erroneous impressions created by travellers imperfectly informed, or prone to exaggeration. Among the unfounded notions sedulously propagated by the advocates of arbitrary power, is, the opinion that this vast empire, the government of which may be regarded as the beau ideal of despotism, has been torn by fewer revolutions and civil wars than the free states of the West; and that its military power is a kind of colossus, fabricated by the wisdom of ages, which no force or policy

that could be exerted by any European nation, would suffice to overthrow. It is hoped, however, that such ideas will be wholly dissipated by a careful perusal of these volumes; and from the numerous authorities the author has consulted, both native and foreign, they will be found to convey a more correct and extended view of the internal history of China, and of her foreign intercourse, than has ever yet been given to the public. The free access to her ports, which British merchants will henceforth enjoy, must greatly tend to remove those obstacles which have hitherto separated her vast population from the rest of the world; and it is expected that the happiest results will ensue—that a new era in the annals of the empire will immediately commence—and that the day is not far distant when the Chinese will occupy an elevated rank amongst the civilized and Christian nations of the world.

Canton, Nov. 10, 1833.

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SKETCH
OF
CHINESE HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHICAL REMARKS.

CHAINS of mountains, extensive deserts, rivers, seas, and the wide ocean, constitute the natural limits between the various countries of the globe. Departing from the Caspian Sea on the west, and proceeding eastward, we enter the territories of one of the most numerous families of mankind,—the Scythians, so frequently alluded to in ancient history, who continue up to the present day to inhabit the immense mountain plateaus of central Asia. Though divided into many tribes, they may all be regarded as de-

scended from one common stock ; and whether known under the name of Huns, Tatars, Mongols, Mantchoos, or Turks, their visage and manners exhibit a striking resemblance. We observe, however, in the Western Tatars, a nearer resemblance to the Caucasian races ; their figure is slender, their features more European, their beards long, whilst the Mongols are distinguished by a flat nose, a prominent cheek, and beardless chin. The closest affinity exists between these and the thin-bearded Chinese, whose depressed noses, small and oblique eyes, and scanty beards, with the stiff and bristling hair of the head, seem to prove them to be branches of the same tribe. Proceeding still further in an easterly direction, we shall be able to trace the concatenation of this great family among the Mantchoos, Koreans, Japanese, and Loochooans. The Hindoo-Chinese nations form the link between these widely spread tribes and the people of India, though their Tatar features are the more prominent.

We shall now take a general view of the countries inhabited by this most numerous race of men. The territories of the independent Tatar tribes border on the west upon the Caspian Sea ; on the north upon the river Ural and the steppes of Issim ; to the south upon a chain of the Hindoo Koosh ; while they are separated from the tribu-

tary tribes by the Beloor mountains. This immense tract of land may be divided into the country of the Kirghees, on the north, with the districts of Karakalnaks, and of the Arabians, and the states of Tashkent, and Turkestan; on the west, Khawaresmia, and the country of the Turkomans; on the south east Great Bukharia with Firgana, and the countries of Sogd, Os-rushna, &c.

Independent Tatary may be considered as a basin, surrounded by high mountains. The Beloot-Tag on the East, and the Alax-oola chain to the north east, are covered with eternal snow. Immense steppes traverse this extensive country in every direction, and compel the inhabitants to adopt the nomadic, or wandering life. There are in this part of Tatary only two rivers of any importance, and of the lakes, the Aral is the largest. Here the great hordes of Kirghees pitch their tents; and from the Issim steppe, and even from beyond the Algydim-Shalo mountains, carry on their depredatory incursions against the neighbouring tribes, by all of whom they are feared as fierce and restless marauders. Turkestan, and the land of the Kipjaks are both countries of very limited extent. The inhabitants of the eastern coasts of the Caspian Sea are the Turkomans, who live upon a rocky, sandy soil, scantily supplied with water. Yet

Tatary does not every where present the same dreary wilderness: to the south of the Aral lake are the fertile regions of Khawaresm, with its musical inhabitants; and the Great Bukharia, remarkable for the fertility of its soil. This is the land of the Usbeks, who wrested it by conquest from the successors of Timour. Its principal provinces are Sogd, Samarkand, Vash, Kilan, and Badakshan.

Even the cold regions of Siberia are inhabited by some Tatar tribes, who have founded numerous colonies in the southern part of the Tobolsk government, and are spread as far north as the banks of the Tomsk, the Tchulym, and the Obi, differing little in their outward appearances from their southern brethren.

Passing the intervening countries, and advancing further in an easterly direction, we arrive at the Peninsula of Korea, with its immense number of islands on the west coast. Here we observe the Tatar race in its most favourable aspect, unmarked by those diminutive features, which characterise the tribes inhabiting central Asia. The soil being exceedingly fertile, and the climate healthy, man thrives and adopts habits of industry, while he abandons the roving habits which distinguish the inhabitants of more barren countries.

Mantchooria is bounded on the east by the sea

of Japan. La Perouse's Strait affords, in this direction, a passage into the archipelago of Yesse; whilst the Songaar strait forms a communication between the sea of Japan and the great Eastern Ocean. The Japanese mediterranean is separated from the great ocean by a chain of islands, which stretches out up to the Kurile islands to the north, and as far as the Loochoo islands to the south. These innumerable mountainous isles are inhabited by a race of people by no means inferior to the Chinese, and stamped with the true features of the Tatars. Their heads are large, their necks short, their noses broad and snubbed, and their eyes oblong, small and sunken, with deep furrowed eyelids. Prolific like their brethren of the continent, they have prodigiously increased and multiplied, rapidly extending their conquests, and peopling all the numerous islands of the Japan seas. The Loochooans, who are very little distinguished from them, inhabit a few islands to the south, and are a more diminutive race.

The Eastern, or Malayan Peninsula, is entirely inhabited by nations, whose Tatar origin is by no means doubtful; since their eyes, their hair, and the contour of their limbs, clearly belong to this race. The western parts are possessed by the Arracanese, Burmese and Peguans, the southern divisions by the Siamese;

the south-east by the Kambodians, whilst the eastern coast is peopled by various savage tribes of Tsiompa, and by the Cochin-chinese and Tunquinese, who approach nearest in their features to the Chinese. The interior of the Peninsula is inhabited by several *Laos* tribes, and a few harmless savages. The richness of the soil would afford to the inhabitants abundant means of subsistence, did not their indolence and want of intelligence keep them in want and wretchedness.

Having given a brief outline of the nations, which, deriving their origin from the same stock as the Chinese, inhabit the various countries encircling this extensive empire ; we shall now enter into a fuller account of those nations and countries, which more or less acknowledge the Chinese sway.

Following the divisions of the Chinese Government, by which they are known in native maps, we first mention the province of Ele, under which Soungharia and Eastern Turkestan are comprised. Its northern boundary is the Altai-chain ; the Chaman mountains and the River Irtish towards the north-east separate it from Mongolia ; on the east, according to the new division of territory, it borders upon China Proper ; the Kwan-lun mountains and desert of Kobi are situated to the south ; and its west-

ern frontiers are formed by the Beloor mountains.

When the Soungars were a powerful nation and had taken possession of Little Bukharia, or Turkestan, their capital was Ele; and the Chinese also have made this the seat of their government. At the present moment Soungaria is a very small district, since the cantons of Barkoul and Oroumtchi have been added to the province of Kan-suh, under the names of Chinse-foo, and Teih-hwa-chow. Soungaria consists of a concave *plateau*, bounded on the north by the mountains of Ulugh or Ulu-Tag and on the south by the Alak chain; and contains many lakes, the largest of which is the Palkati or Balkash. The principal river is the Ele, which takes its rise in the Celestial mountains, or the Teën-shan. It was on the banks of the Ele that the Soungars, a tribe of Kalmuks, attracted by the richness of pasture, first fixed the seat of their power. Their Khan, Taid-sha, lived in a place denominated Harchash, where they kept immense droves of horses and large-tailed sheep; but their horned cattle, and camels, were less numerous. This wide-spread Kalmuk tribe, of which several branches have found their way even to the south-eastern steppes of Europe, are known among themselves by the appellation of *Derben Oeroet*, “the Four Brothers or Al-

lies." They are the Se-fan or Hoshoits, who dwell in the neighbourhood of the Kokonor lake; while the Soungars, who, at the present moment inhabit Soungaria, are of the Tourgouth and Tourbeth tribes. These latter withdrew themselves from the Russian yoke, left the steppes of Astracan, and in 1770 removed into Soungaria. The fourth tribe, the Tourbeths, have now amalgamated with the Tourgouths and Soungars. The Kalmuks are the exact representatives of the ancient Huns, in their roving habits, their fierceness, horsemanship and whole mode of life. The anterior angle of their eye is directed obliquely downward towards the nose, the eyebrows are black and thin, the nose is flat and broad at the extremity, the cheek-bones are prominent, and both head and face extremely round.

Soungaria is the Siberia of the Celestial Empire, a place for exiles from the most distant parts of China. Chinese colonists have recently found their way thither, and the country has likewise received a straggling population of Hassacks and Tourgouths. Upon the whole, it appears to be a cold, inhospitable region, only fit to be inhabited by a race like the Kalmuks.

Little Bukharia, or Eastern Turkestan, the territory of the Eight Mohammedan cities, was brought under subjection to China by Keen-

lung in 1738, and appears to be situated between the 34th and 43d parallels of north latitude, and between the 79th and 83d degrees of longitude, east from London. It is bounded on the north and east by the Kalmuk country; on the south comes in contact with Tibet; and on the west borders upon the Beloot Tag. It is watered by the river Yarkand, which discharges itself into the lake of Lop. The *Teën-shan*, or “Celestial Mountains,” commence a little to the north-east of Hami, and running westward in the parallel of 42 degrees, separate the whole of Soungharia from Turkestan. Here we meet with the extensive desert of Kobi,* the table-land of central Asia. It commences on the eastern frontiers of Mongolia, stretching south-westward to the farther frontier of Turkestan, separating Northern from Southern Mongolia. On the east of Turkestan the desert widens considerably, sending forth an extensive branch to the north-west as far almost as Kobdo. To form some conception of this dreary plain, let the reader imagine a tract of land interspersed with few oases, and a continued sand-flat, thickly strewn over with transparent pebbles.* The

* See Marco Polo's account of this vast desert, in the *Lives of Celebrated Travellers*, vol. i. p. 21—23.

† See the interesting account of Bell of Antermony, in St. John's “*Lives of Celebrated Travellers*,” vol. ii. p. 154, 155.

cold in winter is rigorous, whilst during the summer the reflected rays of the sun occasion an intolerable heat. Yet Turkestan is not entirely a desert ; there being many fertile tracts, which produce abundance of vegetable food. It was cultivated at an early period. Marco Polo found a great many cities, but the frequent inroads of the Tatars, and repeated invasions of the Kalmuks laid the land desolate. It is now inhabited by a peculiarly industrious race of people, among whom many Tourgouths, and Eleuths or Kalmuks have taken up their abode. The greater part of the inhabitants are Mohammedans, divided into many sects, who live in a constant state of hostility, and frequently disturb the Chinese frontier. The principal cities are Yarkand, or Yerkiang, the new capital, and Kashgar, the ancient capital. From its being divided into eight districts, which bear the names of their respective capitals, it is occasionally called the Eight Mohammedan Cities.

More extensive than all the foregoing is Mongolia ; but the middle of this region is a cold and barren table-land ; the termination of the vast desert of Shamo or Kobi, which is about 1,400 miles in length. The countries of Hami, Lop, or similar fertile oases, afford agreeable interruptions to its dreary and forbidding monotony. The meadows along the banks of the

river furnish rich pasturage for the numerous horses of the Mongols.

The country is divided into four parts: 1. Inner or Southern Mongolia, to the south-east of the great desert of Kobi, on the north of China, and west of Mantchooria. 2. Outer Mongolia, or the country of the Kalkas, on the north of Kobi, and the south of the Altai mountains, extending from the Khingan chain, on the frontiers of Mantchooria, to the foot of the Celestial Mountains. 3. The country about Tsing-hae or Kokonor, between the provinces Kan-suh, Sze-chuen, and Tibet. 4. The dependencies of Oulia-soutae, situated to the north of the Western Kalkas.

The Hwang-ho, or "Yellow river," traverses part of Southern Mongolia; the Selenga and Orchon, in the north, carry their water to the Lake Baikal, whilst the junction of the Kerolon and Olon forms the great river Amoor. At the base of the Bogdo Mountains is the great lake of Kosogol.

This vast region is inhabited by the Mongols, once the scourge of the greater part of Asia and of Eastern Europe. They are nomades in the strictest sense of the word. Those who assisted the Mantchoos in the subjugation of China, were dispersed throughout the whole of the conquered empire, and their posterity constitutes an army

divided under eight standards. Many of their nobles fill high stations in the government, whilst their countrymen, in Mongolia, form numerous bodies of cavalry under the command of their respective native princes, who are subject to the Emperor of China, and frequently attached to him by the ties of blood. The twenty-four tribes, or Aimaks, in Inner Mongolia constitute forty-nine standards or Khochoun,—Ke, in Chinese. The Kalkas form eighty-six standards; those in the vicinity of Tsinghae, or Kokonor — a country also inhabited by Kalmuks, Tourgouths, Tourbeths, and Hoshoits, are comprehended in thirty-four standards; whilst the inhabitants of Ouliasoutai are governed by a General, who guards the frontiers against the Russians. The other tribes are scattered over a part of Siberia, and Mantchooria. They choose rather to live in their tents, than to build cities. Amongst their settlements we find only one town worthy of our notice, viz. Maimatchin, on the very frontier of Russia, and at present the seat of trade with Kiakhta. Continually changing their place of abode from north to south, according to the season, they live upon animal food, and a few vegetables; and are even happy in the midst of the desert. Their numerous flocks consist of horses, camels, black cattle, sheep, and goats, which constitute their

riches ; and in rearing and employing them for their own use, they exhibit considerable skill.

Tibet, Tangout, or Se-tsang, as the Chinese denominate it, comprises nearly 25 degrees of longitude, and above 8 of latitude. Its boundaries, on the north, are Tsinghae, or Kokonor, and Eastern Turkestan ; on the east it borders upon the provinces Sze-chuen and Yunnan ; on the south it is conterminous with the tribes of Noo-e, Semangheung and the kingdom of Ghorka ; and on the west with Badakshan in great Bukharia, and Kashmere in Hindoostan.

The Chinese divide this dependency into Tseën-tsang and How-tsang, or Anterior and Ulterior Tibet. Anterior Tibet, which borders upon China, contains eight cantons, and has Lassa, or more correctly H'lassa, for its capital. It includes also thirty-nine feudal* townships or Too-sze, which are situated towards the north, and border upon Kokonor. Ulterior Tibet lies to the west, 28 degrees of longitude west from Peking. Its capital is Khashi-Koumbou, the residence of the Bant-chin-erdeni ; and numbers under its jurisdiction six cantons, governed by two Chinese officers, who

* This expression must not be understood literally, for, strictly speaking, the feudal system has never prevailed in any part of Asia.

bear the title of Ta-chin (great ministers.) These satraps occasionally consult the Dalai-lama and the Bant-chin-erdeni. The northern parts are under the immediate control of Chinese officers. This form of government was given or rather forced upon the country, during the latter end of Keën-lung's reign, who abolished the dignity of Gialbo or King. The Lamas, or priests, who still possess a great share in the affairs of government, exercise likewise a considerable sway over the minds of the people.

Tibet is a plateau, elevated several thousand feet above the level of the sea. The Himalaya, "abode of snow," a stupendous range of mountains, extends along the southern and western frontiers of Tibet; the Dhawalagiri, or "White mountain," the highest in the world, towers far beyond the clouds; other parts of Tibet are less mountainous, and abound in a fertile soil. Innumerable rivers take their rise on this tableland, all of which flow more or less in a southern direction. The principal are the Yarou-tsangbo-tchou or Irrawaddy, whose source is in the Tam-tchoak hills. After having flowed almost in the same parallel from east to west in Tibet, it enters Yunnan Province, crosses Birmah, and falls into the sea near Martaban.

The Indus takes its rise probably near Gortope or Gorroo, in lat. $31^{\circ} 20' N$; long. $80^{\circ} 30' E$;

flows south-west towards Kashmere, whilst it passes several hundred miles through a rude and mountainous country, and the lower ranges of the Hindoo Koosh, and having received many tributary streams, falls into the Indian Ocean.

The river Ganges likewise takes its rise on the frontiers of Tibet, amongst the Himalaya chain, and from thence enters Hindoostan, flowing in a south-westerly direction, till, by a westerly course, it finds its way into the Bay of Bengal.

The same ridge of mountains, which gives birth to the Irrawaddy, contains probably also the sources of the Bramaputra, which, after a course of one thousand seven hundred miles, mingles, near Luckipoor, its waters with the Ganges.

Tibet likewise has numerous lakes, amongst which, the Tengkiri is the largest. The inhabitants are an industrious race of people, and hardy, on account of the severe climate under which they live; but, of all the Tatar tribes, they are, perhaps, the most superstitious and priest-ridden.

We ought, perhaps, to have included in this geographical sketch, a short outline of Bhootan and Nepaul; but, as it is not yet decided,

whether or not these provinces are to be annexed to China, or the still vaster empire of Great Britain, we at present refrain from describing them.

Since the accession of the present family to the throne of China, Mantchooria, or Mantchoo Tatary, has been incorporated with the empire. This extensive country is divided into three provinces:—1. Shing King, or Moukden, the ancient Leaou-tung; 2. Kirin; and 3. Tsitsihar, or Hih-lung-këang. The Mantchoo boundaries are,—on the north, the Daourian mountains, which separate Mantchooria from Siberia; on the east, the ocean; on the south-east the Japan Sea; on the south, Korea, the Gulph of Pih-chih-le, and the Great Wall; on the west, Mongolia. Its average extent from east to west is about sixteen degrees; from north to south, about twelve degrees. Subject to Kirin are several savage tribes, called Keyakun and Feyak. Under the government of Tsitsihar, are included the Solons and several Mongol tribes, and also the island of Segalien.

The principal rivers are the Amoor, or Segaliën, called by the Chinese, Hih-lung-këang, which forms the boundary between Mantchooria and Siberia; the Songari, which rises in the

Chang-pih-shan, or Long White mountains, near the northern frontiers of Korea. The Nonn, or Nonni, has its source in the large plateau, formed by the inner Daourian mountains, flows southward, and falls into the Songari.

On the east is a long chain of mountains called Seih-hih-tih, which stretches along the coast. The Daourian mountains, on the northern frontiers, are branches of the great Yablonoi, or Stanovoi chain. The Hing-an-ling, or Sialkoi mountains form, on the north of Mantchooria, an extensive plateau, through which the Nonni flows. Kirin and Tsitsihar are not unlike the Mongolian steppes ; but Shing-king is a very fertile country, yielding abundance of grain and vegetables, and is doubtless one of the richest parts of the Chinese empire. It contains, moreover, several large cities, amongst which, Moukden, the capital of Mantchooria, holds the first rank ; and, from its being the native place of the imperial family, enjoys very great privileges. Along the coast, there are many good harbours, and large emporiums ; the principal of which are Kinchoo, Kae-choo, and Fung-hwang-ching, on the Korean frontiers, where the Koreans carry on a trade with the Mantchoos.

20 The Mantchoos, a Tongoosian race, have, since their conquest of China, become a civi-

lized people. Those who remain in their original country, form, nevertheless, a portion of the imperial forces. Every male is obliged to enlist under one of the royal standards, of which there are eight. Many thousands are dispersed throughout the whole Chinese empire, where they are either soldiers, or hold the highest offices in the state. They were originally nomades, in manners not unlike the Mongols, though inferior in courage. The inhabitants of the northern provinces are a miserable race, living almost exclusively upon dried fish. In Lëaou-tung district, they are agriculturists, and amalgamate with the numerous Chinese colonists, who have cultivated their soil, and are obedient servants to their haughty masters.

The Celestial Empire itself deserves our particular notice. From the earliest times of history, China has assumed a superiority over all other countries. Its rulers and philosophers imagined that "the flowery nation," the first on the globe, inhabited a country surrounded by the four seas. To them, the land of Barbarians was only a solitary small isle, or a frontier desert, unworthy of their notice, upon which they looked down with the utmost contempt. The great nation was to keep all nations in subjection, and to exercise an unlimited sway over the four seas. China, in the eyes of its native phi-

losophers, is like the Polar Star in the firmament, around which the whole universe revolves; like the sun in the heavens, which transfuses its light and warmth over the whole earth. Every country exists only as Chinese compassion and benevolence suffers its existence; the exterminating and cherishing power is delegated to the visible vice-gerent of material heaven—the emperor of China—the son of heaven; and all countries ought to acknowledge his supremacy and their own vassalage. He acts by heaven's immediate decrees; he is the dreadful instrument of punishing those, who exhibit a refractory spirit, and of showing mercy to the obedient followers of heaven's will.

These childish and extravagant notions have greatly influenced Chinese geographers. The native writers have drawn a charming picture of the fertile soil, the splendid cities, beautiful canals, majestic rivers, and romantic scenery of their own land,—a complete paradise on earth; and in order to maintain the celestial reputation, some European writers have been equally bombastic in their praises, while others have endeavoured to obliterate by one sweeping remark, all these magnificent ideas. The writer is anxious to be impartial, and to state the result of his own observation.

The best geographical account we possess of

China has been drawn up by the Jesuits, who surveyed the country, and constructed the best existing maps. The accompanying one is their work, with some additions from native authorities. As, however, they only delighted in pronouncing panegyrics upon every thing Chinese, we cannot implicitly rely upon their descriptions. The author, indeed has frequently smiled, when he compared their poetical encomiums, with the truly wretched state of the respective districts.

CHINA is a name very probably derived from the dynasty Tsin. It is called by the natives Chung-kwo, the middle kingdom, and Tang-shan, the hills of Tang (the name of one of the most celebrated dynasties ;) the present reigning family has given it the name of Ta-tsing-kwo, the Empire of great Purity. In government proclamations, especially in those addressed to Barbarians, it is often called Tëen-chaou, the “Celestial Empire;” the natives call themselves Chung-kwo-teih-jin, men of the middle kingdom, or Han-jin, or Tang-jin, men of Han or of Tang (from the dynasties of those names). The whole empire is often designated by the appellation Tëen hea—under heaven.

China Proper, is situated between the 18th and 41st degrees of N. latitude, and between the 98th and 123rd degrees longitude E. from

Greenwich, and contains about 1,298,000 square miles. China's northern boundary is the Great Wall, which separates it from Mongolia and Mantchooria. On the east it borders upon the Puh-hae, or Gulf of Pe-che-lee, and the Eastern Ocean; on the south it is bounded by the China Sea, Tunkin, the country of the Laos, and Birmah; on the west by Tibet, Little Bukharia, and Turkestan. It is difficult of access, excepting on the northern and eastern sides. The Great Wall on the Tatar frontier, is wholly inadequate to the defence of the country against modern tactics; on the east it can be assailed by any petty maritime power; it has every where excellent harbours, and ships may go a considerable distance up some rivers without any fear of meeting a force to repel them.

The country is divided into eighteen provinces. The four northern ones are, Chih-le, Shan-tung, Shan-se, and Ho-nan; the eastern ones are, Këang-soo, Gan-hwuy, Che-këang, and Fuh-keën; the central provinces are, Hoo-pih, Hoo-nan, and Këang-se; the western are, Shen-se, Kan-suh, and Sze-chuen; the southern are, Kwang-tung, Kwang-se, Yun-nan, and Kwei-chow. These provinces are divided into Foos, Choos, Tings, and Heëns, which names may answer to our counties, shires, districts,

and cantons, though there exists a great difference.

The principal rivers in China are the Yangtsze-këang, perhaps one of the largest in the world. It rises in Tsing-hae, where it bears the name of Muhloosoo, then enters Sze-chuen, under the name of Kin-sha, traverses a part of Yun-nan, re-enters Sze-chuen; after which, taking an easterly course, it flows through Sze-chuen, Hoo-pih, Këang-se, Ganhwuy, and Këang-soo, where it falls into the ocean. This vast stream is joined to all the other rivers of China by canals. It would not be difficult, indeed, to penetrate, by means of this splendid river, through all the central provinces of China, even as far as the empire of Tibet.

The Hwang-ho, or Yellow River, is also a very noble stream. Taking its rise at Sing-suh-hae, in the Mongol district of Kokonor, it touches Sze-chuen in its progress to Kansuh, and passes through Shen-se. From thence it takes a course directly north, and passes into the territories of the Ortous Mongols; when, having approached the limits of the Kobi desert, it returns in a southerly direction, forming a boundary between Shen-se and Shan-se, till it reaches the latitude of its source. From thence it takes an easterly

course through Ho-nan, Shan-tung and Këang-soo to the sea, which it reaches after a course of 2,000 miles. Rivers of minor magnitude are numerous; the more remarkable are the Pih-këang, the Choo-këang, and the Pih-ho. The numerous canals which intersect the country, and render inland communication exceedingly easy, deserve the admiration of all foreigners. Amongst them is the Grand Canal or Yun-ho, which joins the Yellow River with the Yang-tsze-këang.

The principal lakes of China are the Tung-ting-hoo, in Hoo-nan; the Poyang, in Këang-se; the Tae-hoo, in Këang-soo, and several others of less importance. The two most considerable chains of mountains run, the one in a south-easterly, and the other in a north-westerly direction. Both Kwang-se and Kwei-chow, and several other provinces, are more or less mountainous; but the provinces of Chih-le and Keang-soo are complete plains, like Bengal.

Though China possesses a great variety of climates, it is in general much colder in a given latitude than any other country to the west, in the same degrees of latitude. Its productions are manifold, but both in variety and quantity, far inferior to what is found in Europe. Every province has its particular soil. Rice, the great

desideratum, is every where cultivated except in the northern provinces, and in very sandy and dry soils. A great many of the provinces produce tea; fruit-trees are comparatively scarce, and the fruits generally inferior to those of Europe. Very few kinds of vegetables are cultivated by the Chinese, who have never endeavoured to transplant them from foreign soils; even the useful potatoe has never been introduced, and is only known in those parts to which Europeans repair.

The breeding of horses and cattle is likewise neglected; almost every kind of hard labour being performed by human hands, and the natives consuming comparatively little animal food.

Though our European grains are grown, bread is unknown; the Chinese cakes resembling it very little. It may be necessary, however, to treat separately of each province.—Pih-chih-le, or Chih-le, the province where the court is established, is extremely sandy, and by no means fertile. Its area comprises about 59,700 square miles, and it contains, according to the latest census, 27,990,871 inhabitants. Peking, its metropolis, the capital of the whole empire, situated in this province, may be regarded as one of the largest cities in Asia.

The coast is exceedingly flat, destitute of any good harbours, and bordered by extensive shoals, which render navigation very difficult. The only emporium is Teën-tsin, on the Pih-ho, a large trading place.

Këang-soo and Gan-hwuy, comprising 81,500 square miles, with 72,011,560 inhabitants, which formerly constituted the Keang-nan province, are exceedingly fertile, and perhaps the most populous districts of all China. Nan-king, the ancient capital and the celebrated Soo-choo, lie in Këang-soo. The land towards the sea is a continued plain, and contains many thousand villages and cities. The inhabitants possess both skill and industry, and are celebrated all over the empire, for their literary talents. Këang-nan, however, has few good harbours; the one most visited is Shanghai; but its inland navigation is more important.

Këang-se has a fertile soil, but an overflowing population, so that there is little surplus of grain for exportation. It ranks in importance perhaps after Këang-nan-soo. Its extent is 27,000 square miles, with 30,426,999 inhabitants. The principal cities are Nanchang-foo and Jaou-choo-foo. In the mountains are found a great variety of metals,

but the Chinese are not very skilful in digging mines and extracting the metal from the ore.

Fuh-keën province comprises 57,150 square miles, and 14,777,410 inhabitants; it has also Formosa or Taewan under its jurisdiction. The southern part is very barren, not affording a sufficient supply of grain even for the consumption of the natives, and it is supplied with great quantities from the rich granary of Formosa. The northern districts are more fertile, and produce abundance of tea. No part of the Chinese coast has so many good harbours, and nowhere in China is so brisk a trade carried on. The inhabitants are very enterprising, and emigrate in great numbers to the southern regions of Asia. They are decidedly a commercial people, and very partial to foreigners. Amongst the ports, we only mention Amoy, Tseuen-choo or Chin-choo, and Fuh-choo-foo, the capital of the province. Formosa itself is one of the most fertile islands in the world. It produces large quantities of rice and sugar, besides camphor and many other valuable articles. The western coast runs out into a very large sand-flat, from which the sea continually recedes. Its harbours are very few. Between Formosa and the

continent the Pescadores are situated, which, though exceedingly barren, are important as military stations, and possess excellent harbours.

Che-këang, the land of silks and green teas, contains 57,200 square miles and 26,256,784 inhabitants. It is thickly inhabited, and its cities are perhaps the finest in the empire. Hang-choo, its capital, is celebrated all over China for its beauty and the romantic scenery in the environs. There are many large emporiums and good harbours, among which Ningpo holds the first rank; and next in order follow Chapo, Wan-choo, and Tae-choo. Amongst the numerous Chusan group, there are several excellent harbours sheltered against all winds.

Hoo-pih and Hoonan comprise the territory formerly called Hoo-kwang province; the former contains 27,370,098, and the latter 18,652,507 inhabitants, upon a superficies of 168,300 square miles. The fertility of these provinces is highly extolled by Chinese writers, but they yield nothing for exportation. The principal cities are Woo-chang-foo and Chang-sha-foo.

Honan, with 62,000 square miles and 23,037,171 inhabitants, is considered as the first tract of land which was inhabited by the Chinese, and where Fuh-he held his court. The greater part of the country is a plain, which, towards the west, swells into mountains. The

capital is Kae-fung-foo, a large city, with a very industrious population.

We now approach Shan-tung, the native country of Confucius. Its coast has very rocky promontories and fertile valleys, but the overgrown population, amounting to 28,958,760, upon 56,800 square miles, exhausts the soil. Along the whole coast we meet with good harbours, the rendezvous of numerous junks: the principal emporiums are Ting-choo-foo and Kaou-choo-foo. Pinching poverty forces great numbers of the inhabitants from their native soil. They go in quest of livelihood to Lëaou-tung, and furnish from thence their poor relations with the necessaries of life. The grand canal, or Yun-ho, runs through a part of this province, and is navigated by innumerable small craft. All the grain-junks which bring the tribute of the provinces to the capital, have to pass through it on their way to Peking. The capital is Tse-nan-foo.

Shense numbers 10,207,256 inhabitants upon 167,700 square miles; it is less populous than any of the foregoing provinces, though the ancient Chinese had colonized here at a very early period. The capital is Se-gan-foo. As starvation is seldom heard of in this province, we may conclude that the soil furnishes sufficient food for the inhabitants.

Shan-se, as well as Kwei-chow, are sterile and mountainous provinces, which grow very little rice, and are therefore thinly inhabited. Though Yun-nan is of greater extent, the number of inhabitants amounts to scarcely more than five millions; for the country is very mountainous, and inhabited by barbarians. We should have given the exact number of inhabitants, if we could rely upon the Government's census as far as it regards these three provinces. Kan-suh seems to be better inhabited; the census gives more than fifteen millions. This province has been greatly enlarged by adding to it the Soungarian districts of Barkoul and Oroumtsi. The population is very mixed, but the prolific Chinese race greatly predominates.

There remain now only Sze-chuen, Kwang-tung, and Kwang-se. Sze-chuen is the largest of all the provinces, for it comprises 175,600 square miles, with comparatively a small number of inhabitants, viz. 21,435,678, which gives only 122 to every statute mile. Those portions of the province which are, without doubt, capable of cultivation are very fertile, but ridges of mountains and sand-flats render a great part of the soil useless. The capital is Ching-too-foo.

Kwang-tung is better known to Europeans than any other province. It has 97,100 square

miles, with 19,174,030 inhabitants, a number certainly not overrated. There are several good harbours on the coast, but none equal to those in the neighbourhood of the provincial city, Kwang-choo-foo or Canton. Canton is one of the greatest emporiums in Asia, and the only place in the Chinese dominions legally open to foreigners. It is a large city, and has a numerous population. They are very skilful in imitating European manufactures, and possess, in many points, greater abilities than the rest of their countrymen. But it is not to be inferred that the whole province is inhabited by the same race; those who live eastward from Canton resemble the Fuh-keën race, rather than the inhabitants of the metropolis. Kwang-tung appears to be a rich province, and the exports are very numerous. Këung-choo-foo, or the island Hainan, belongs to its jurisdiction. In the mountains of Kwang-tung and Kwang-se live great numbers of the Meaou and Yaou tribes, who appear to be the aborigines of the country. Throughout all the mountainous districts of China, but especially towards the south, remnants of various uncivilized tribes are to be met with, some of which have submitted to the Chinese government, while others still maintain their liberty by force of arms.

Kwangse has only 7,313,895 inhabitants upon

87,800 square miles. It produces abundance of grain. The mountains are rich in ore, and even gold-mines are to be found; but the policy of the Chinese government does not allow the working of them upon a large scale, for fear of withdrawing the attention of the people from the cultivation of the soil. The capital is Kwei-lin-foo. The adjacent country is inhabited by many barbarous tribes, who frequently commit great ravages.

Whilst giving the enormous sum of 367 millions as the actual number of inhabitants in China, the author is fully persuaded, that the last imperial census is as near the truth as it can be ascertained. Those parts of the empire which he has visited are extremely populous. He has taken the trouble of examining some parts of the census, and numbering the houses of small districts, and has invariably found, that the population was under-rated. The Chinese are naturally a very prolific people; few individuals only live a single life; early marriages, which seldom prove barren, are general throughout the empire. Government has always encouraged the matrimonial estate, and their ancient institutions devote a childless man to contempt. Thus the population must increase and multiply on a progressive scale. As the wants of the common people are so very few,

and their habitual industry renders every barren spot tributary to them, we may easily conceive, that so large a population can find the means of subsistence.

The estimate of the whole extent of the Chinese territory is 3,010,400, square statute-miles, 1,298,000 of which constitute the area of China Proper. The whole empire is thus larger than Europe and the population is at all events far more numerous. It is very probable, that neither the Persian, nor the Macedonian Empires ever equalled China in extent of territory or in populousness ; even the Roman monarchy during the age of Augustus could never muster so many subjects. Thus stands this colossus, peerless, if compared either with any state whose greatness is recorded in ancient or modern history, and looking back upon the many centuries of its existence, during which all its contemporaries have decayed and mouldered in the dust, whilst China alone has stood the test of ages ; though conquered and over-run by a destructive enemy, it has never been annihilated. The Chinese nation has never amalgamated with any other, as have all the other large nations of the globe, but has been constantly extending and mingling with the adjacent barbarian tribes, until the great superiority of their numbers have exercised an overpowering influence.

The Chinese empire now comprises a greater extent of territory than under any of the preceding dynasties, and its population was never at any former period so large. The thought, that so many millions are slaves to debasing superstition, and under the iron rule of antiquated custom, is dark and cheerless. But the day will certainly come, when the hand of the Almighty shall be stretched out to redeem them from spiritual bondage.

CHAPTER II.

GOVERNMENT AND LAWS.

At the head of the Chinese government stands the emperor, as the son of Heaven, Heaven's vicegerent below, invested with unlimited power and virtue, the sole distributor of Heaven's favours on earth. His station is so greatly elevated above that of all common mortals, that he demands the adoration of his subjects, not unlike the Roman emperors of old. Besides the appellation of Tëen-tsze, "heaven's son," he is called Hwang-te, "the august emperor," or Hwang-shang, "supremely august;" Ta-hwang-shang, "the great supremely august," and Shing-choo, "the holy lord." In addressing him, it is not very uncommon to use the phrase Wan-suy-yay, "the lord of a myriad of years;" or, in speaking of him as we say "his majesty," "the court, &c.," the Chinese make use of the phrase Chaou-ting, "the palace." The mandarins, as well as the other natives, not only prostrate themselves when in the presence of his imperial majesty, but also before a tablet,

with the inscription, Wan-suy-yay. Dressed in a robe of yellow, the colour worn, say the Chinese, by the sun, he is surrounded by all the pageantry of the highest dignity in the world ; whilst the extensive empire lies prostrate at his feet. But, notwithstanding his exalted station, he is, nominally, the father of his people ; though, under the appearance of the most lenient patriarchal government, his sway is, in fact, that of the most absolute despot. In no country in the world is tyranny so well cloaked under the endearing names of paternal authority. Punishments are denominated mere chastisements, even when the criminal is cut to pieces, or perishes cruelly by a slow and most ignominious death. The emperor of China, the common father of an immense family, does not punish, but correct ; he is actuated by the most tender compassion, when he sucks the blood of the subject and tramples upon the laws. Like the pope, in Europe (and he is nothing but a political pope, equally arrogant in pretensions), the emperor is almost considered infallible. But with the view of curbing, in some degree, his tremendous authority, the law has appointed censors over his conduct, whose admonitions, however, he may not choose to receive. Ordinary characters, even when seated on the throne, will always be under a certain control ; but, a

tyrant of strong mind and great capacity may oppress China with impunity.

For the maintenance of the court, which is extremely numerous, many thousand grain junks are annually sent up to the capital with the tribute of the respective provinces. The imperial *revenues* are enormous ; but the expenses, on the other hand, are equally great. Of the palace, the most pompous descriptions have been given ; but those who have viewed it without prejudice, find only a great collection of dirty buildings, kept in bad repair. It is inclosed with a wall about twelve Chinese *Le* in circuit. The imperial hall of audience is a very spacious apartment, upon the floor of which every Mandarin, who enters the presence, has his place assigned. The throne is a simple but lofty alcove, devoid of ornament, bearing the inscription Shing, holy, sacred. In front of it are placed large brazen vessels, in which incense is burnt continually ; for the emperor receives from his subjects the same homage as the idols. On court-days the assembled mandarins come to *kow-tow*, literally “ knock head,” whether the emperor be present or not. The massive gates and walls of the imperial palace give it the appearance of a fortress ; and the harem, which forms a large portion of it, is an extensive range of buildings, containing a great number of

females. The emperor has likewise several pleasure houses, with extensive gardens, to which he occasionally repairs. On solemn occasions, when he goes forth to plough the field, or to pay his adoration to Heaven and Earth, he is accompanied by a numerous escort of officers and princes of the blood. Otherwise, like all eastern monarchs, he seldom appears in public. During the reign of the existing dynasty, however, it has been customary for the emperor to engage, during the autumn, in hunting excursions.

Though invested with the utmost political power, the emperor performs also the office of high-priest, in which capacity he repairs to the imperial temples, where he repeats a form of prayer, which has been in use on similar occasions during many ages. If any calamities afflict the country, he is wont to accuse himself as the cause, and to utter the prescribed lamentations, in order to appease the gods. Thus, he keeps on good terms with heaven, earth, hills and rivers, and all the nation. As much of his actions as he wishes to be known, are recorded in a daily gazette, which is but a dry detail of ordinary and uninteresting occurrences. His proclamations are framed according to a prescribed form; for he only examines, or, rather, causes to be examined, the ancient records, and writes

and acts conformably ; although he is careful to reserve for himself the liberty of setting aside his declared intentions, whenever it suits his convenience. One remark, in regard to all Chinese institutions, which applies also to the emperor, may here be made :—the theory is, in many instances, very excellent, but the practice is generally exceedingly defective. A crafty, lying, base spirit pervades the court, and all the officers of government. Persons have nowhere, indeed, to complain of a want of fair words ; but the actions, which form a contrast to them, are abominable. A well organized system of oppression is carried on from the highest minister of state to the pettiest mandarin ; every one is most anxious to exercise his rapacity upon those below him ; and those, in their turn, practise the same tyranny towards their inferiors.

The present imperial family is very numerous ; and the nearest, as well as the most distant relations wear a badge, indicating their high descent. They are seldom, however, entrusted with high offices of state, lest they should meddle with politics, and endanger the safety of the government. The princesses intermarry with Mongol princes, to bind these unruly hordes by the ties of blood, the most powerful in nature. At their marriage, they

receive from the imperial treasury a certain dowry, and a moderate revenue for life.

The supreme government consists of the following departments. At the head of all the tribunals stands the Nuy-ko, or cabinet, composed of Mantchoos and Chinese, which has also a herald's officer attached to it. The Tsung-jin-foo, a board for the control of the imperial family, ranks very high, but has no direct influence on state affairs.

The six tribunals are :—

1. Le-poo, the tribunal of officers, by which are selected those civilians who are invested with rank, and promoted or degraded.

2. Hoo-poo, board of revenue, which superintends the imperial treasury, territory, and population, receives and disburses, &c.

3. Le-poo, board of rites, which watches over the maintenance of decorum, and of the strict uniformity to ancient regulation, that the ne plus ultra wisdom of antiquity may not be encroached upon by innovation. This tribunal has likewise the charge of the ceremonial, where the spirits of heaven and earth, and the manes of the ancestors are invoked, in order that no object of national superstition may be defrauded of his due. With a firm hand they restrain every thing within the prescribed form; spare the people, as well as the emperor, the trouble of

thinking and acting for themselves ; and vigorously resist every improvement as highly dangerous. A breach of etiquette is visited with their highest displeasure ; for all the rites and ceremonies having been distinctly pointed out by Confucius, it would be impiety to be wiser than the great sage. If they met with the same disobedience as similar tribunals in Europe, and possessed equal powers of mind, this board would be as severe as the Inquisition in Spain.

4. Ping-poo, the tribunal of war, superintends all military affairs, and appoints the officers of the army.

5. Hing-poo, the tribunal of punishments, is the guardian of all the law, which watches over the public safety. In China, the numerous petty laws in force are the mere instruments of those who are intrusted with their execution. The will of the emperor is law, a mandarin's will is law ;—justice to the best bidder.—Such is the true picture of the state of affairs.

6. Kung-poo, the board of works, which has the superintendence of all the public buildings, fortresses, walls, dykes, &c. One might be led to think, however, that the present generation had ceased to care for their public buildings, since every thing belonging to government is in a state of dilapidation ; yet this board continues to exist.

Under the control of the board of rites there is also a board of music; which may be regarded as a mere mockery, for though this institution was founded with the intention of promoting harmony by music, an ancient Chinese custom, nothing could be more inapposite; for the sounds are harsh and grating to the ear, and instead of tranquillizing the mind, give rise to unpleasant feelings in all those who are in any degree conversant with the principles of harmony.

There is also a colonial office, called Le-fan-yuen, which regulates the affairs of the dependent states. All the members of this board are either Mantchoos or Mongols; so that the respective tributary princes may have confidence in referring whatever concerns their interests to their own countrymen, who are in power.

The Too-yu-she, or "censors," constitute a separate body, whose office is called Too-cha-yuen. It is their duty to watch over the words and actions of the emperor, and to upbraid him freely for every species of misdemeanor. We are likely, perhaps, to be reminded, by this institution, of the Roman censors, whose stern animadversions filled that queen of the earth with trembling; but we shall be greatly mistaken, if we imagine that a Chinese cen-

sor is the same unbending man. They are a servile class, who fawn when they ought to blame; but those few exceptions to this general remark, are extolled to the skies; and, under such a despotic government, unquestionably deserve great credit.

The national college, or Han-lin-yuen, is a body of learned doctors, who have arrived at the most extensive celebrity, and are the guardians of Chinese literature. They are eligible to the highest offices of state, and exercise great influence in the most important affairs of government. Their learning consists in the knowledge of the Chinese classics, works which a schoolboy cons, and a Han-lin explains. General knowledge is excluded from this department. If they can write a good essay, discourse upon the doctrines of Confucius, and unite with this a knowledge of their own country, and a few imperfect geographical notions, they are truly learned men. But woe unto him who should be daring enough to utter any thing beyond what Confucius has taught. Their learning does not consist in examining, but in blindly following established principles.

There are several bureaus for reviewing and dispatching petitions and edicts. The officers of the imperial household are likewise divided

into separate bodies, who hold a very high rank in the empire.

The Kin-tëen-këen, “the imperial astronomical board,” has been much celebrated. As an Asiatic establishment, indeed, it deserves a great deal of credit; but, to compare it with any of our European institutions, is really ridiculous. It has been greatly improved by the labours of Europeans; but as these, at the present moment, are dismissed from the service, it is very likely, that it will fall again into utter decay.

The above-named are the principal officers in the capital. Before speaking of the governments of the provinces, it will, perhaps, be necessary to give a general idea of the different grades of the mandarins, who, whether military or civil, are divided into nine ranks, or Pin, every one of which is again sub-divided into principal and secondary. The distinguishing badge of these respective ranks are, a button or knob worn on the cap, and certain embroidery on the front and back of their state robes. Those of the first two ranks wear in their caps a red coral globe; the ornament of the third or fourth is of a light or dark blue colour; that of the fifth is of crystal; that of the sixth is of white stone, while the globes of the inferior ranks are of gold, or gilded brass.

Only the highest officers of state wear a red button, such as prime ministers, imperial guardians, cabinet ministers, &c. Viceroys of provinces and rulers of the before-mentioned boards, are invested with the second rank. In the third and fourth are included the officers in a province; in the fifth and sixth the secondary officers; in the seventh and eighth, the civilians of inferior distinction; and, in the ninth, clerks and other petty officers.

The provinces are governed either by a viceroy or his lieutenant, who represents the emperor in all his functions, and is called the father of the province. The principal officers of the districts stand in the same relation to those over whom they rule, and are supposed to imitate the emperor in the exercise of benevolence. Besides a governor, there is, in some of the larger provinces, also a lieutenant-governor. The former is called Tsung-tuh, the latter Foo-yuen. Besides them, there is the Te-tuh Lëo-ching, the first literary officer in the province, who also occasionally controls the army; a Poo-ching-sze, who, amongst his various employments, holds that of treasurer; Gan-chasze, or criminal judge; a Yen-yun-sze, or salt-inspector, and a Lëang-taou, or inspector of the public granaries.

At the head of a *Foo*, district or department, is the Che-foo, who has under him several other

inferior officers ; the same is the case with the mandarins of the Chow, Hëen, and Ting districts, all of whom have their assistants and deputies in every department of public business.

The whole Chinese system of government is pervaded by a spirit of regularity unknown in any other part of Asia. All the parts are closely linked together ; every document has to pass through numerous hands before it reaches its final destination. Though this is a very dilatory way, it prevents numerous mistakes. We might compare this government to a steam-engine, receiving its propelling power from Peking, and communicating it, by means of numerous wheels, to all parts of the empire. All business is performed in a regular routine ; no new regulation interrupts the once adopted course ; age after age, affairs are transacted in the same manner, without the least deviation. In general, the civil officers are well paid ; but they are not content with the imperial stipend, for whatever the stated salary may amount to, double this income is acquired by extortions. There are, it is true, very severe laws against this nefarious practice, but as too many are implicated in the crime, it is in vain to expect the execution of a law which denounces all parties. Now and then, however, a tyrannical governor is made an example of, to terrify others from pursuing a similar course.

As all principles of good government and the whole code of virtue are, according to Chinese opinion, contained in the Classics, it is indispensably necessary for every one, who wishes to hold any public station, to be well versed in these writings. The government, therefore, from the time of the Tang dynasty, has instituted regular examinations, open to all those who wish to become candidates for public employments. When they have studied the Classics thoroughly, and are able to give satisfactory answers to the questions proposed, they are admitted to the lowest degree of scholarship (sew-tsae)—from thence they advance to the rank of keu-jin; this renders them eligible for officers of state. Beyond this, there are only the degrees of Tsin-sze and Han-lin. The emperor appoints literary examiners, whose sole business it is to pronounce impartially their judgement upon the essays produced at the examinations. The utmost integrity is required from those who are invested with this high office; but nevertheless a great deal of clandestine management is carried on, both with and without their knowledge. Offices are also sold to the best bidder, a custom highly injurious to the interests of a country.

In all despotic governments in Europe we have a secret police, and in China there exists

something similar. The emperor employs his inspectors to pry into every man's affairs, and to report according to what they have seen or heard. Upon the greater offices of government some person always acts as spy, in the capacity of a clerk or aide-de-camp. These men communicate freely with the cabinet, and have also access to the imperial presence.

Whilst contemplating this immense engine, we may, perhaps, be astonished that so large a machinery keeps together. How many jarring interests must be conciliated, how many bad designs counteracted! Nevertheless, the whole fabric keeps well together; some praise, therefore, is due to the Chinese system of governing, which, with all its defects, is suited to the genius of the nation. However, it is easy to draw a dyke around a stagnant water to keep the country from inundation; the matter is quite different when we have to provide against the inroads of a foaming sea, or the rapid current of a swollen mountain-stream. China, with all its millions, is in a lethargic state; there is no mental vigour, no wish for any thing better than the existing state of things, and therefore it is very easily retained in subjection by a paltry and weak government.

To maintain this despotism, and to inspire awe in all the surrounding barbarian states, the

Chinese government keeps up a nominal army of more than a million soldiers, besides the militia and the numerous standards of Mongol cavalry. This number seems prodigious ; but we must deduct from this enormous number many myriads, whose names are merely entered in the books, but who never enter into actual service. A Chinese soldier is a citizen of the state,* who receives very little pay, and rice just sufficient for his daily maintenance ; he is, therefore, obliged to support his family by some other means. The emperor seems, in some measure, to have provided for this, by giving to the Mantchoo, and other corps, portions of land, which they cultivate. Few of them are unmarried ; the greater number are attached to the soil, and unwilling to leave their families behind. It is a well-known fact that the Chinese have very little martial courage, and the Mantchoos are upbraided by one of the emperors for being still great cowards. If they, therefore, seek their safety in flight whenever they meet with a reverse, we need by no means be astonished. Several corps have the character, *valour*, painted on the *back of their jackets* ; and nothing can be more characteristic of the Chinese martial spirit. The generals, though

* Resembling exactly the Janissary of the Ottoman empire, previous to the reforms of Mahmood.

no great tacticians, know how to negotiate, and therefore, wherever military force is of no avail, money will infallibly do the work.

The whole army is divided into standards or corps, which are distinguished by their different borders and colours, not unlike our brigades; these are again subdivided into camps and wings—the right, left, and middle. They are commanded by officers who must undergo some examinations in the military art, such as archery, throwing a javelin, &c. before they can arrive at any rank in the army. They are reckoned far below the civilians, who are thrice as well paid, and who treat a military officer like a police agent; which has brought the whole body into disrepute. The greater part of the officers are raised from the ranks, but before they are promoted they must regularly take their degrees, like the civilians, though their promotion is more rapid. Besides, they are generally natives of the place where their corps is stationed. The titles of the principal officers in a province are Te-tuh, commander-in-chief of the forces,—Tsëang-keun, a general,—Tsung-ping, lieutenant-general,—Foo-tsëang, colonel,—Tsan-tsëang, sub-colonel,—Yew-keih, lieutenant-colonel,—Too-sze, major,—Show-pei, captain,—Tsëen-tsung, lieutenant,—Pa-tsung, sub-lieutenant,—Wae-wei, serjeant. All these

ranks are distinguished by the buttons which they respectively wear. The principal weapons of the Chinese are bows and arrows ; they have also very clumsy matchlocks ; their guns, mostly made of iron, are without carriages ; and they have besides a great variety of arms, which are, however, by no means generally used. The theory of tactics is very well defined, though not applicable to its full extent. The long peace of the empire has induced an oblivion of the practical parts of warfare. Though the laws are very strict, they cannot inspire the Chinese soldiery with valour. The law says : “ It is the duty of a soldier in the day of battle always to press forward bravely and impetuously ; for whosoever, through fear, or anxiety to save his life, flees, must by the laws of war be decapitated, and his head exposed to the multitude as a warning.” If this law were executed, the whole Chinese army, with very few individual exceptions, would doubtless undergo death.

The Chinese navy is very extensive, numbering, perhaps, one thousand sail, small and large ships included ; the men-of-war, however, are mere junks, which mount a few cannon, but they have no very large vessels. There are generally three high-admirals, Shwuy-sze Te-buh, who command the imperial navy. Their ignorance of naval tactics is such, that even the

merchant-junks are superior to the imperial cruisers, which are commonly at a loss to know how to act in any case of emergency. In 1832, a Canton man-of-war having been driven down the coast, and finally into a Cochin-Chinese harbour, the king of Cochin-China had the humanity to furnish it with a pilot and two of his junks, without the aid of which they would not have been able to return to Canton. In 1829, a government frigate was sent from the Fuh-këen province to Formosa; strong northeasterly gales forced her down the Formosa channel; she could neither retrace her way nor make the land; but, after much beating about, she arrived at Ligor, in Siam. There are many naval stations on the coast, of which Canton, Amoy, and Ningpo are the principal. Their squadrons generally remain in harbour, or cruise about for a few days only. The author once witnessed an attack of a pirate upon a merchant-junk. Five men-of-war were at anchor at the distance of three miles, observing the contest, but they did not think it worth their while to hasten to the assistance of the suffering party. Piracy, which, many years ago, was carried on to a very great extent, could never be put down by the united efforts of the imperial fleet; wearied with their vain efforts, they at length bought over the chiefs, made them mandarins of high

rank, and thus put a temporary stop to the atrocities daily committed upon defenceless traders. Whenever European ships sail along the coast, the naval officers receive orders to drive them away, and not to allow them to come to an anchor for one moment. Yet the united squadrons of several harbours could never muster so much courage as to compel a single ship to get under weigh ; on the contrary, the terror which a single ship inspires is so great, that the Chinese fleet will rather retreat than come to an encounter. I have frequently been an eyewitness of their utter dismay at the sight of well-mounted guns on board the ships ; they have never shown any inclination to provoke the commanders to discharge one broadside, but always endeavoured to soothe the fierce temper of the barbarians.

Many of the Chinese laws are very excellent, others extremely defective ; but they are in general too minute, and frequently prove vexatious and a source of endless oppression. They are reduced to a code, of which an English translation has appeared. No magistrate can execute them to their full extent, there being many which would involve the most circumspect man in crime. But as the will of the rulers, small and great, is the law of the country, this defect is easily remedied. Yet the laws of

China have called forth the admiration of many scholars in Europe: the theory indeed may be called excellent, but of what avail is this if the law is not executed to the letter? The emperor has retained to himself the power of life and death, though he frequently in such cases acts by a deputy, who only in extraordinary instances requires the sanction of the court. Some of the Chinese punishments are very severe; the poor are generally the sufferers, whilst the rich ex-piate their crimes by means of money. It is even allowable to undergo punishment by proxy; and it is not at all extraordinary to see one man die in another's stead!

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTER—USAGES—INDUSTRY—LANGUAGE—
SCIENCES—RELIGION.

WE might be led to suppose, that a nation, said to have no hereditary nobility, and amongst whom merit only is supposed to be remunerated, must be actuated by the most noble and liberal principles. But this is by no means the case in China. A nobility, however, does exist, though it confers scarcely any privileges. Besides the princes of the blood in the collateral lines, there are five ranks of nobility—Kung, How, Pih, Tsze, and Nan. The literati, who have passed the examination, constitute the second class of citizens, and the common people the third. Wherever merit is not allied to riches, it is very difficult to obtain promotion; but riches without merit can obtain rank. All, however, may strive for the highest honours, the meanest plebeian having, theoretically, the prospect of being prime minister, without being upbraided for his low descent. This regulation is productive of a great deal of emulation, so that the

whole of life is frequently spent in the pursuit of the mere phantom—honour, and its emoluments.

The Chinese features are, in themselves, not very handsome: a small eye, and flat nose, a yellow complexion, and a want of expression in the whole countenance, certainly bespeak very little beauty. Still, however, they are far more handsome than the Tatars. Their very ideas of beauty, indeed, differ widely from ours. With them, corpulence in a male, and small feet in a female, are the ne plus ultra of ideal perfection in the human form. It is truly astonishing, that in so extensive a country as China, of which many parts differ so widely in latitude and longitude, no greater variety in the human race should be found. Not only is there the greatest sameness in the colour of the eye and the shade of the hair, but the inhabitants of the various provinces differ very little in their whole outward appearance. Nor is this characteristic sameness confined to the body, it extends also to the mind.*

* This phenomenon has been accounted for in a work recently published. "Travellers," it is observed, "appear not to have remarked the extraordinary family likeness discernible in the Fellahs, who seem to have been all cast in the same mould; and this striking resemblance, which exists in character and manners no less than in features, probably prevailed, also, among the ancient Egyptians; hence the monotony observable in their sculptures and paintings. Despotism is the

The Chinese are in general an industrious people. Being defective in moral courage, they substitute cunning for strength, lying for blunt honesty. They are by no means sanguinary, but endure oppression and hardship, without groaning. When in the full possession of power, however, they often treat those who are placed under them with wanton cruelty. Politeness and affability, kindness and generosity, constitute the true character of a Chinese; and hospitality is a virtue not unknown amongst them. In the relations of common life, they respect their superiors and honour their parents; of their children, they are exceedingly fond, but like all other half civilized Asiatics, they treat their wives with contempt. Chinese women possess, however, a large share of common sense, and are capable of the highest cultivation. They are generally, moreover, most de-
primary cause of this phenomenon; for the multitude, all reduced to nearly the same level, urged by the same wants, engaged in the same pursuits, actuated by the same passions, through a long succession of ages, necessarily assimilate. Poverty depriving them of all pretension to free-agency, they are universally cringing, trembling, dissimulating. Fear is their habitual passion. Credulous, ignorant, superstitious, no man has the originality to be a heretic. In religion, morals, manners, and opinions, the son treads servilely in the footsteps of his father, without inquiry, without reflection; nay, even without the consciousness that nature has endowed him with the power to do otherwise."—*St. John's "Egypt and Mohammed Ali,"* v. ii. p. 373, 374.

votedly attached to their husbands, and make excellent wives and tender mothers; though they are devoid of all those finer feelings, which, in Europe, constitute the greatest ornament of women. Neither sex is very remarkable for sensibility; the sight of misery, which will bring tears into our eyes, seldom moving thir stony hearts. But this bluntness of feeling is constitutional, their nerves being coarser than ours, their minds seldom imbued with principles which control their whole conduct. They are gross in their enjoyments, and not very capable of relishing mental delight. All their wishes tend towards this earth, nor do their hopes extend beyond the grave. To possess riches sufficient to enable them to lead an easy life, to have male children, and to exercise some public employment, form the climax of their happiness. We deplore the utter want of truth amongst them; but this is a defect inherent in the character of all Asiatics. Though naturally fawning and crouching before those in power, they are capable of nobler sentiments, wherever their mind is well directed. Cleaving to ancient custom, with tenacious predilection, they are, at the same time, not entirely blind to the advan-

tages of amelioration. Upon the whole it must be confessed, that there is much in the Chinese character capable of the highest improvement; they are, at all events, not inferior to any other Asiatic nation, and, if converted to the Christian faith, would probably rank very high in the scale of nations.

Few nations make use of so many compliments as the Chinese. Bowing, kneeling, and prostrating themselves are the different grades of the respect they show towards each other. Confucius taught the strictest observance of rites and ceremonies, as the only means of refining the manners. His doctrine has become the law of the empire, and the whole nation is anxious to make up, by outward politeness, for the want of sincerity. Every relation in life has its ceremony, the due observance of which constitutes the perfection of man.

The food of the lower classes has little variety, but they eat a great quantity, and refuse nothing that is eatable. They are not addicted to drunkenness, but delight in smoking opium, a drug quite as demoralizing and destructive of health as ardent spirits. On their festivals they fare sumptuously, and give themselves up to excess without scruple.

Their marriages are indissoluble. The pa-

rents consult respecting the proposed connection without regard to the mutual affection of the parties. An old woman concludes the match; the bride is brought in a sedan-chair to her husband, who has perhaps never seen her before; they drink wine out of each other's cups; and are thenceforth man and wife. As the husband has paid a certain sum for his bride, he considers her as his property. The weaker sex seldom violates the vow of conjugal fidelity, but the men marry second wives, keep concubines, and even disgrace the early partners of their life. Infanticide, of which the husbands are the only perpetrators, is not uncommon; but female children only are murdered, and these immediately after their birth. This horrible crime meets with no punishment from the laws of the country; a father being the sovereign lord of his children, he may extinguish life, whenever he perceives, or pretends, that a prolongation of it would only aggravate the sufferings of his offspring.

In the exercise of filial piety the Chinese excel. This, in fact, is the great basis upon which their philosophers erected their whole system of politics, the foundation of a well regulated society. We are, however, no very enthusiastic admirers of Chinese filial piety. As long as a child is commanded to honour father and mother, to serve them till death calls them away, we think highly of the commandment; but,

when children are required to pay divine honours to the manes of their ancestors, we regard such a veneration as idolatrous, and repugnant to the law of God, the supreme author of our lives. Yet, such are the injunctions of the Chinese philosophers, which are, alas! too rigidly followed up.

The Chinese having no hope beyond the grave, run into excess, in thus mourning for the death of near relations. Every part of the ceremonial is exactly regulated; even the period, manner, and degree of the mourner's grief being duly prescribed. The corpse, being dressed in warm clothes, is deposited in a substantial coffin, and kept for several days above ground, whilst the survivors express their measured grief by gesture, dishevelled hair, sack-cloth and mournful silence. When a lucky spot has been selected for the grave, the corpse is consigned to the bosom of our universal mother, earth. Building a tomb in the form of a horse-shoe, they inscribe thereon the name of the deceased, erect a tablet to his memory in the hall of his ancestors, and repair annually to the graves, in order to prostrate themselves before the manes, and to offer victuals to those hungry spirits. In the temples, divine honours are paid to their memory. To supply their full wants, in the other world, they burn gilt paper, paper chariots and houses, with every necessary article

of furniture, which are supposed to be changed in the other world into real utensils; whilst the gilt paper, when burnt to ashes, becomes so much ready money. The greater the personage, the more protracted is the mourning; the emperor mourns three years for his parent, and every good subject follows his august example. Mandarins resign their office during this period of affliction, literati avoid entering the examinations, the common people abstain for some time from their labour.—Would not the belief in the Saviour of mankind, as he who shall raise the dead, abolish these useless lamentations?

In domestic life the Chinese know few comforts. Their houses are built with too little regard to convenience; cleanliness in their persons and habitations is quite out of the question. Their ideas of the elegancies of refined life are extremely circumscribed. The richer classes have substantial brick-houses, though generally not very large, and seldom beyond two stories high; the poorer people exist in a most wretched condition, their houses being mere hovels built of loose stones, bricks, or mud. But with all these wants, real or imaginary, the Chinese are a contented people, not destitute of real cheerfulness. Then only, when their craving ap-

petite cannot be satisfied, and the hideous spectre of starvation invades their cottages, they fall into sullen despair; but so long as they have any thing to eat, be it even grass or leaves, they retain their good spirits. The author has often seen them seated around a dish of thin potatoe soup and a basin of boiled grass, with as great satisfaction as if they partook of the dainties of the royal table. The principal food of all classes is rice. In the northern provinces, the common people daily eat millet or wheat; and when they cannot afford the money to buy a sufficient quantity of food, they add so much water as to make up the deficiency in weight of their daily sustenance.

The industry of the Chinese is remarkable. They bestow the utmost diligence in the cultivation of their lands, though their implements of husbandry partake of primitive simplicity, and the whole work is done without the aid of modern improvement. They, however, turn every spot of ground to some advantage. As the husbandman provides the food for all classes of citizens, he holds a high rank in the estimation of government; the mechanic is less esteemed. In silk manufactures, lackered ware, and embroidery, the Chinese greatly excel. They were formerly also very famous for their manufacture of porcelain, but disdaining to improve, they have been surpassed by Europeans. En-

tire strangers to machinery, they cannot cope with our modern manufactures ; they are ready to imitate, but slow to invent. The trade carried on in a country so thickly inhabited is enormous, and no nation in Asia can boast an equal porportion of merchant craft. The canals afford all facilities for inland communication. The trade by sea, carried on by many thousand junks, is principally in the hands of Fuh-këen merchants, whose enterprising spirit is truly admirable. A mercantile spirit pervades the whole nation ; instead of shunning commercial intercourse with foreigners, as we have been hitherto led to believe, they are most anxious to engage in it, though restrained to a certain extent by their rulers. Immense advantage would accrue both to the Chinese and British nation, were all ports open to English ships. But though government be anxious, perhaps, to cut off as far as possible all intercourse with foreigners, it would not possess the power to refuse such a demand, if seriously proposed.

Nothing has so much puzzled the learned world, in Europe, as the Chinese language. To express so many ideas as arise in the mind of man by 1445 intonated monosyllables—to substitute a distinct character for a simple alphabet, seems undoubtedly a gigantic effort of human genius. But the Chinese have effected, what we might have deemed impossible. They

have 487 distinct monosyllables, which they increase to the above stated number of sounds by five different intonations. This, however, is only applicable to the mandarin dialect; every province, every district has its peculiar *patois*, in which the number of sounds and intonations varies. Wherever mistake might arise from the similarity of sounds, they combine two monosyllables, which thus express one idea. Yet, notwithstanding all these helps, great ambiguity remains, and even the natives must often have recourse to writing, in order to make themselves understood, as it requires a well accustomed ear to catch all the ideas, when fluently expressed. Hence the difficulty, which foreigners experience, in acquiring this curious language, and in conversing intelligibly. The characters, which amount to about 14,000, are composed of 216 radicals, which express the most simple ideas. There is a copiousness in this mode of writing, which no alphabetical language can imitate; but at the same time it is tiresome to wade through the mazes of so many characters, which represent no sound, of which the signification is often multifarious and changed by position. If all the characters were always written alike, there would be less difficulty in acquiring a due knowledge of them; but the form frequently changes, and the running hand deviates entirely from the correct form of

the character. Some have traced these characters from the Egyptian hieroglyphics ; but it is pretty evident, that the Chinese have created a peculiar mode of writing for themselves, without adopting any foreign system.

Strictly speaking, the Chinese language has no grammar, the mutual relation of words is pointed out by their respective positions. Gender, number, case, tenses, moods, &c., are expressed by particles, which either precede or follow the verb. But this arrangement differs so widely from ours, that a literal translation from English into Chinese is perfectly unintelligible. The Chinese language has more peculiarities than perhaps any other known. Its syntax is very artificially arranged, a good style measures the sentence to produce a rythmus, which is exceedingly pleasing to the Chinese ear. Terse phrases, continual antitheses, not unlike the productions of some French writers, are considered the highest beauties. The Chinese prize a pointed expression more highly than a well conceived thought.

The above remarks will show plainly, that the nature of the language renders obscurity unavoidable. None of the Chinese standard works can be understood without a commentary ; which is certainly a material defect. The conversational style differs widely from the writ-

ten one, the former dispensing a great deal with all the auxiliary particles. Many expressions, however, which appear to a foreigner very obscure, are plain to a Chinese, who is led from his childhood to think in this peculiar way. It ought also to be remembered, that the Chinese thoughts are stereotyped; that scarcely any modern author hazards a single idea, which is not contained in the classics, or in some work of the ancients, so that, by a simple reference to these, he can be easily understood, even if he expresses himself indistinctly. By these sweeping remarks, we wish by no means to intimate, that the Chinese language is a meagre skeleton; on the contrary, we fully admit, that it is one of the most copious languages in the world.

To teach the language is the sole object of the many myriads of schools in China. A pupil studies nothing but the language; if he can read fluently, and write elegantly, and make poetry, he is an accomplished scholar. When a boy enters the school, he learns at first the sounds of the characters by heart, without knowing their meaning, for the language spoken by the people differs from the language of books; he then traces them upon paper, and after having continued this course for a few years, the meaning is explained to him in the common dialect. The classics, which are read and learned by heart from beginning to end, treat of filial piety

and political economy, so that China must always abound in dutiful children and excellent governors.

Chinese literature is very rich. There are few subjects in the wide range of the sciences, upon which we do not meet with a Chinese work. Many of the books are truly excellent, and will be noticed in due time ; as far as their own history, philosophy, polity, and poetry, are concerned, they may furnish us with very valuable hints ; but their works upon natural history, geography, chemistry, &c., are very defective, and often childish. We may easily conceive in what state the sciences must be, when there exist no good scientific works to teach them. Their so much boasted knowledge of astronomy is confined to very few persons, and even these understand it very imperfectly. Medicine is very generally studied, and the number of doctors is as large in China as in any other country in the world. Their physicians, though very expert in prognosticating diseases by feeling the pulse, know nothing of anatomy. Moreover, they treat all diseases upon the supposition that the body is composed of the five elements, water, fire, metal, wood, and earth, which, by losing their due equilibrium, are the causes of all complaints. This theory gives rise to a great many serious practical errors. When we

see in Europe the press teeming with new publications, we ought rather to be astonished, that amongst 367 millions of men, there is not one original writer, nor has there been any for many centuries. The essays of successful literary candidates are almost the only new publications, which see the light, and these contain nothing but what many millions before them have written under similar circumstances.—We mourn over the mental lethargy of China, and wish earnestly, that some benevolent and persevering foreigners would take the lead in enlightening this vast nation.

The Chinese are remarkable for their indifference in regard to all religions. The Confucian school does not deny the existence of a Supreme Being, but neither defines this fundamental article of every rational creed, nor inculcates the necessity of worshipping the only God. In all other classics, we do not even find a hint on the creation of the world ; every thing is produced by the reciprocal operation of the male and female principles—Yang Yin ; heaven operates, earth produces. In vain do we look for the consoling doctrine of the immortality of the soul ; Confucius's speculations do not extend beyond the grave. He inculcates polytheism, by enjoining the worship of heaven and earth, the spirits of hills, rivers, winds and fire ; in fact, all nature, excepting nature's omnipotent God.

His doctrines, called in Chinese Joo-keasu, the religion of scholars, is the orthodox creed of the state. To the founder, divine honour is paid by all his followers, who are not very scrupulous in worshipping one idol more or less, and have long maintained the most absurd pantheism.

The sect of Taou, which has for its founder a contemporary of Confucius, Laou-tsze, or Laou-keun, is more mystical in its tenets than any of the three. Theirs, however, is not a popular belief. They are gross idolaters. To enumerate *all* their idols, would be a very difficult task; we only mention San-tsing, the three pure ones; Shang-te, or Yuh Hwang, the supreme august one; Pih-te, the northern emperor, &c. Laou-keun's work, the Taou-tih-king, is still extant. We meet in it the vestiges of adulterated truth, the Trinity, Logos, immortality, &c. The Taou priests think themselves possessed of the liquor of immortality, and pretend to understand alchymy; but they die like all other mortals, and are, notwithstanding their art, generally very poor.

The two foregoing superstitions are indigenous; but China has added to its numberless absurdities, Buddhism. This foreign creed has gained more followers than either of the preceding. Myriads of idols, which only the hot-brained fancy of Hindoos could create, have been imported into China. With them, Buddha,

Kwan-yin, the goddess of mercy, and Tëen-how, the queen of heaven, hold the highest rank. The Buddhists are not very particular respecting the objects of their worship; to them every other religion is the same, except that they consider their own the best, because it teaches the best method to pass through the numerous changes of the metempsychosis, till the devout worshipper arrives at the consummation of bliss—annihilation. Buddhist priests are very much despised, though they manage to maintain themselves by the credulity of the people, by reading masses, saying prayers, begging, &c.*

Moreover, there are many thousand Mohamedans in China, who are neither zealous in the propagation of their doctrines, nor over strict in the observance of their religion. The Roman Catholic Christians were once very numerous; and even at present, we are told, that they amount to 600,000. We find, besides many brotherhoods and secret associations, amongst which the Tëen-te-hwuy, or Triad society, is the most formidable. This fraternity, which is now widely spread, aims at nothing less than the subversion of the present Tatar dynasty.

* On the subject of the religions of China the reader may consult an article on Oriental Missions, in the "Foreign Quarterly Review," No. X. pp. 485—516; and Abel Remusat's "Melanges Asiatiques."

CHAPTER IV.

CHRONOLOGY.

THE Creator said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years." After the deluge, the Almighty said: "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." These simple words contain the basis of all chronology. Upon examination, we find that scripture history is the touchstone of the historical annals of all nations. Every people has its fabulous ages: the Bible keeps up the thread of real history, but it is left to the rational faculties of man to trace the course of time, and reconcile seeming difficulties.

All writers on the affairs of China agree that the Chinese are a very ancient nation. But that their empire existed before the flood, and even

before the era which we assign for the creation of the world, is as extravagant and unfounded as the mythological stories of the Hindoos and Greeks. We believe that the Chinese had as early a notion of astronomy as the Chaldeans and Egyptians; we give also much credit to their calculations of eclipses, but we greatly doubt whether their chronology is as accurate as we might be led to believe by the advocates of the antediluvian existence of their empire. Not only is the fabulous part of the Chinese history very uncertain, but even the two first dynasties, Hëa and Shang, labour under great difficulties, which never have been entirely removed. We must, in fact, date the authentic history of China from Confucius, 550 B.C., and consider the duration of the preceding period as uncertain. At the same time, though desirous of avoiding that confusion in our history, which would result from the introduction of mere conjectures respecting the reigns of the Hëa and Shang emperors, we have adopted the dates which Chinese historians have assigned, and which some of their translators consider as incontrovertible. Chinese ancient astronomy has been justly celebrated by many; but if we suppose their calculations to have been correct, the ancient Chinese, who lived, according to them, 4000 years ago, greatly surpassed their posterity

of the present day, who, after so much instruction from foreigners, still betray a childish ignorance on many essential points of this difficult science. Confucius evidently labours to refer the origin of his doctrines (which either originated with himself, or were transmitted to him by tradition) to the remotest antiquity, for the purpose of inspiring his countrymen with veneration for them. In order to effect this, he had to create for his nation an authentic history out of the materials furnished by tradition. As there were no regular annals, or any celebrated historiographer who flourished before his era, he was not able, notwithstanding the most laborious researches, to avoid error. The destruction of the greater part of Chinese books by Ché-hwang-te, the first universal monarch of China, doubtless contributed likewise to render the chronology more erroneous.

The Chinese cycle (called Hwa-keâ-tsze) consists of sixty years. The year commences from the conjunction of the sun and moon, or from the nearest new moon, to the fifteenth degree of Aquarius. It has twelve lunar months, some of twenty-nine, some of thirty days. To adjust the lunations with the course of the sun, they insert, when necessary, an intercalary month. Day and night are divided into twelve periods, each of two hours. The horary cha-

racters which they use serve also for giving names to the years of the cycle, and for the twenty-four points of the compass. They also divide the months into three decades, called Sëun: the days are also named after the twenty-eight constellations, four of which mark the weekly sabbath. We find in the Chinese calendar the lunar months, the time of the sun's rising and setting, the length of day and night, according to the respective latitudes of places, with much astrological nonsense.*

* See Du Halde. London 4to. edit. v. 2. p. 128. *Memoires sur les Chinois*, tom. 11.

PERIODS.

CHINESE historians divide the whole period of their history according to the dynasties which successively sat upon the throne. As we, however, wish to blend this history with the annals of the western world, we have followed a more convenient order.

I. MYTHOLOGICAL ERA.

From Pwan-koo to the death of Te-shun.

Duration uncertain.

II. ANCIENT HISTORY.

From the commencement of the Hëa dynasty to the conclusion of the Han dynasty.

B.C. 2207 to A.D. 263.

III. MIDDLE AGES OF HISTORY.

From the Tsin dynasty to the Yuen dynasty.

A.D. 264 to 1367.

IV. MODERN HISTORY.

From the Ming dynasty to the present time.

A.D. 1368 to 1833.

NAMES OF THE
CHINESE KINGS AND EMPERORS,
DURING THE FOUR PERIODS OF THEIR HISTORY.

MYTHOLOGICAL ERA.

From Pwan-koo to the death of Te-shun.—Duration uncertain.

I. THE THREE EMPERORS.

三 皇 紀 東 洋

1. 盤 古 氏

2. 天 皇 氏

3. 地 皇 氏

4. 人 皇 氏

5. 有 巢 氏

6. 燧 人 氏

1. Pwan-koo-she.

2. Tëen-hwang-she.

3. Te-hwang-she.

4. Jin-hwang-she.

5. Yew-chaou-she.

6. Suy-jin-she.

* * * The reader will please to remember that the Chinese characters commence on the right hand.

II. THE FIVE EMPERORS.

五帝紀

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1. | 伏 | 羲 | 氏 |
| 2. | 神 | 農 | 氏 |
| 3. | 黃 | 帝 | |
| 4. | 帝 | 少 | 昊 |
| 5. | 帝 | 顓 | 頊 |
| 6. | 帝 | 嚳 | |
| 7. | 帝 | 堯 | |
| 8. | 帝 | 舜 | |

1. Füh-he-she.
2. Shin-nung-she.
3. Hwang-te.
4. Te-shaou-haou.
5. Te-chuen-heüh.
6. Te-kuh.
7. Te-yaou.
8. Te-shun.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

From the Hëa to the Han Dynasty.

B. C. 2207 to A. D. 263.

III. THE HËA DYNASTY.

From 2207 to 1767 B.C.

夏 紀

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 禹 大 |
| 2. | 啟 帝 |
| 3. | 康 太 |
| 4. | 康 仲 |
| 5. | 相 帝 |
| 6. | 康 少 |

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Ta-yu	2205 B. C.
2.	Te-ke	2197
3.	Tae-kang	2188
4.	Chung-kang	2159
5.	Te-seang	2146
6.	Shaou-kang	2097

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|-----|---|----|
| 7. | 帝 | 杼 |
| 8. | 帝 | 槐 |
| 9. | 帝 | 芒 |
| 10. | 帝 | 泄 |
| 11. | 帝 | 不降 |
| 12. | 帝 | 局 |
| 13. | 帝 | 塵 |
| 14. | 帝 | 孔甲 |
| 15. | 帝 | 皐 |

			Reigns commenced.
7.	Te-choo	.	2057 B. C.
8.	Te-hwae	.	2040
9.	Te-mang	.	2014
10.	Te-sëë	.	1996
11.	Te-puh-këang	.	1980
12.	Te-keung	.	1921
13.	Te-kin	.	1900
14.	Te-kung-këä	.	1879
15.	Te-kaou	.	1848

16.

帝 發

17.

桀 癸

Reigns
commenced.

16. Te-fă . . . 1837 B.C.

17. Këë-kwei . . . 1818 to 1767

THE SHANG DYNASTY.

From 1766 B.C. to 1123.

商 紀

1.

成 湯

2.

太 甲

3.

沃 丁

4.

太 庚

Reigns
commenced.

1. Ching-tang . . . 1766 B.C.

2. Tae-këa . . . 1753

3. Wuh-ting . . . 1720

4. Tae-kang . . . 1691

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|-----|---|-----|
| 5. | 甲 | 小 |
| 6. | 巳 | 雍 |
| 7. | 戊 | 太 |
| 8. | 丁 | 仲 |
| 9. | 壬 | 外 |
| 10. | 甲 | 亶 河 |
| 11. | | 乙 祖 |
| 12. | | 辛 祖 |

			Reigns commenced.
5.	Seaou-kää	.	1666 B.C.
6.	Yung-ke	.	1649
7.	Tae-woo.	.	1637
8.	Chung-ting	.	1562
9.	Wae-jin.	.	1549
10.	Ho-tan-kää	.	1534
11.	Tsoo-yih	.	1525
12.	Tsoo-sin	.	1506

13. 甲沃

14. 丁祖

15. 庚南

16. 甲陽

17. 庚盤

18. 辛小

19. 乙小

20. 丁武

			Reigns commenced.
13.	Wüh-kěä	.	1490 B. C.
14.	Tsoo-ting	.	1465
15.	Nan-käng	.	1433
16.	Yang-kěä	.	1408
17.	Pwan-käng	.	1401
18.	Seaou-sin	.	1373
19.	Seaou-yih	.	1352
20.	Woo-ting	.	1324

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|-----|---|---|
| 21. | 庚 | 祖 |
| 22. | 甲 | 祖 |
| 23. | 辛 | 廩 |
| 24. | 丁 | 庚 |
| 25. | 乙 | 武 |
| 26. | 丁 | 太 |
| 27. | 乙 | 帝 |
| 28. | 辛 | 紂 |

			Reigns commenced.
21.	Tsoo-kǎng	.	1265 B. C.
22.	Tsoo-kěä	.	1258
23.	Lin-sin	.	1225
24.	Kǎng-ting	.	1219
25.	Woo-yih	.	1198
26.	Tae-ting	.	1194
27.	Te-yih	.	1191
28.	Chow-sin	.	1154 to 1123

IV. THE CHOW DYNASTY.

From 1122 to 255 B.C.

紀 周

1.

王 武

2.

王 成

3.

王 康

4.

王 昭

5.

王 穆

6.

王 恭

7.

王 懿

Reigns
commenced.

1.	Woo-wang	.	.	.	1122 B.C.
2.	Ching-wang	.	.	.	1115
3.	Kǎng-wang	.	.	.	1078
4.	Chaou-wang	.	.	.	1052
5.	Muh-wang	.	.	.	1001
6.	Kung-wang	.	.	.	946
7.	E-wang	.	.	.	934

8.	王	考
9.	王	夷
10.	王	厲
11.	王	宣
12.	王	幽
13.	王	平
14.	王	桓
15.	王	莊
16.	王	釐

			Reigns commenced.
8.	Hëaou-wang	. .	909 B. C.
9.	E-wang	. . .	894
10.	Le-wang	. . .	878
11.	Seuen-wang	. . .	827
12.	Yew-wang	. . .	781
13.	Ping-wang	. . .	770
14.	Hwan-wang	. . .	719
15.	Chwang-wang	. . .	696
16.	Le-wang	. . .	681

17.	王	惠
18.	王	襄
19.	王	頃
20.	王	匡
21.	王	定
22.	王	簡
23.	王	靈
24.	王	景
25.	王	敬

		Reigns commenced.
17.	Hwuy-wang . . .	676 B. C.
18.	Seang-wang . . .	651
19.	King-wang . . .	618
20.	Kwang-wang . . .	612
21.	Ting-wang . . .	606
22.	Këen-wang . . .	585
23.	Ling-wang . . .	571
24.	King-wang . . .	544
25.	King-wang . . .	519

26. 王元

27. 王定貞

28. 王孝

29. 王烈威

30. 王安

31. 王烈

32. 王顯

33. 王靚慎

34. 王赧

		Reigns commenced.
26.	Yuen-wang . . .	475 B. C.
27.	Ching-ting-wang . . .	468
28.	Kaou-wang . . .	440
29.	Wei-lěě-wang . . .	425
30.	Gan-wang . . .	401
31.	Lěě-wang . . .	375
32.	Hěen-wang . . .	368
33.	Chin-tsing-wang . . .	320
34.	Nan-wang . . .	314

35. 東周君

35. Tung-chow-keun .

Reign
commenced.

255 B. C.

V. THE TSIN DYNASTY.

From 249 to 205 B. C.

秦紀

1. 莊襄王

1. Chwang-seang-wang .

Reigns
commenced.

249 B. C.

HOW, OR AFTER TSIN.

後秦紀

1. 始皇帝

2. 二世

1. Che-hwang-te .

246

2. Urh-she

209

VI. THE HAN DYNASTY.

From B.C. 207 to A.D. 263.

漢紀

1.		高祖
2.		惠帝
3.		呂后
4.	元後年元	文帝
5.	元中年元	景帝
6.	光元元建	武帝

	Reigns commenced.
1. Kaou-tsoo	202 B. C.
2. Hwuy-te	194
3. Leu-how	188
4. Wăn-te, Yuen-nëen, How-yuen	179
5. King-te, Yuen-nëen, Chung-yuen	156
6. Woo-te, Keen-yuen, Yuen-kwang	140

* * * The characters given after the emperors' names are the Kwō-haou, "national designations" of the emperors during their reigns.

7. 鳳元元始 帝昭
 8. 節地始本 帝宣
 9. 光永元初 帝元
 10. 始建 帝成
 11. 壽元平建 帝哀
 12. 始元 帝平
 13. 攝居 嬰子孺
 14. 始更 王陽淮

	Reigns commenced.
7. Chaou-te, Che-yuen, Yuen-fung	86 B. C.
8. Seuen-te, Pun-che, Te-tseih	73
9. Yuen-te, Tsoo-yuen, Yung-kwang	48
10. Ching-te, Këen-che	32
11. Gae-te—Këen-ping, Yuen-show	6
12. Ping-te, Yuen-che	1 A. D.
13. Joo-tsze-ying—Këu-shě	6
14. Hwae-yang-wang—Kang-che	23

EASTERN HAN.

東漢紀

1.	光武	建武	中元
2.	明帝	永平	
3.	章帝	建初	元和
4.	和帝	永元	元興
5.	殤帝	建平	
6.	安帝	永初	元初

Reigns
commenced.

1.	Kwang-woo, Këen-woo, Chung-yuen	25 A.D.
2.	Ming-te, Yung-ping	58
3.	Chang-te, Këen-tsoo, Yuen-ho	76
4.	Ho-te, Yung-yuen, Yuen-hing	89
5.	Shang-te, Këen-ping	106
6.	Gan-te, Yung-tsoo, Yuen-tsoo	107

7. 始永 嘉陽 康永 帝順

8. 嘉永 帝冲

9. 初本 帝質

10. 平和 和建 帝桓

11. 平熹 寧建 帝靈

12. 安建 平興 平初 帝獻

Reigns
commenced.

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|---|------------|
| 7. Shun-te, Yung-këen, Yang-këa, | |
| Yung-che | 126 A.D. |
| 8. Chung-te, Yung-këa | 145 |
| 9. Chih-te, Pun-tsoo | 146 |
| 10. Hwan-te, Këen-ho, Ho-ping | 147 |
| 11. Ling-te, Këen-ning, He-ping | 168 |
| 12. Hëen-te, Tsoo-ping, Hing-ping, | |
| Këen-gan | 190 to 220 |

MIDDLE AGES.

From the Tsin to the Yuen dynasty.

A. D. 264 to 1367.

THE HOW, OR AFTER HAN DYNASTY.

後漢紀

1. 昭烈 章武

2. 後帝 建興 延熙

Reigns
commenced.

1. Chaou-lěě, Chang-woo . 221 A.D.

2. How-te, Këen-hing, Yen-he 223 to 263

VII. THE TSIN DYNASTY.

From 264 to 420 A. D.

晉紀

1. 武帝 泰始 咸寧

Reigns
commenced.

1. Woo-te, Tae-che, Han-ning 264 A.D.

2. 康元 熙永 帝惠

3. 嘉永 帝懷

4. 興建 帝愍

Reigns
commenced.

2. Hwuy-te, Yung-he, Yuen-kang 290 A.D.

3. Hwae-te, Yung-kea . . . 307

4. Min-te, Këen-hing . . . 313

EASTERN TSIN.

紀晉東

1. 昌永 帝元

2. 興大 武建 帝明

Reigns
commenced.

1. Yuen-te, Yung-chang . . . 317 A.D.

2. Ming-te, Këen-woo, Ta-hing . . . 323

3. 康咸和咸 帝成

4. 元建 帝康

5. 平升和永 帝穆

6. 寧興和隆 帝哀

7. 和太 奕帝

8. 安咸 文簡

9. 康寧 武孝

		Reigns commenced.
3.	Ching-te, Han-ho, Han-kang .	326 A. D.
4.	Kang-te, Këen-yuen .	343
5.	Muh-te, Yung-ho, Shing-ping	345
6.	Gae-te, Lung-ho, Hing-ning .	362
7.	Te-yih—Tae-ho . . .	366
8.	Këen-wăn, Han-gan . .	371
9.	Heaou-woo, Ning-kang .	373

10. 熙義 興元 安隆 帝安

11. 熙元 帝恭

Reigns
commenced.

10. Gan-te, Lung-gan, Yuen-hing 397 A.D.

11. Kung-te, Yuen-he . . . 419

VIII. THE NORTHERN SUNG DYNASTY.

From 420 to 479 A. D.

紀 宋 北

1. 初永 祖高

2. 平景 帝少

3. 嘉元 帝文

Reigns
commenced.

1. Kaou-tsoo, Yung-tsoo . . . 420 A. D.

2. Shaou-te, King-ping . . . 423

3. Wăn-te, Yuen-kěă . . . 424

4. 武 帝 永 初

5. 廢 帝 景 和

6. 明 帝 太 始 太 豫

7. 蒼 梧 王 元 徽

8. 順 帝 景 明

		Reigns commenced.
4.	Woo-te—Yung-tsoo . . .	454 A.D.
5.	Fei-te—King-ho . . .	465
6.	Ming-te—Tae-che, Tae-seang	465
7.	Tsang-woo-wang—Yuen-hwuy	473
8.	Shun-te—King-ming . . .	477

IX. THE TSE DYNASTY.

From 479 to 502 A. D.

齊 紀

1. 高 帝 建 元

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Kaou-te—Këen-yuen . . .	479 A.D.

2. 明永 帝武

3. 泰永 帝明

4. 元永 侯昏東

5. 興中 帝和

		Reigns commenced.
2.	Woo-te—Yung-ming . . .	483 A.D.
3.	Ming-te—Këen-woo, Yung-tae	494
4.	Tung-hwăn-how—Yung-yuen	499
5.	Ho-te—Chung-hing . . .	501

X. THE LĒANG DYNASTY.

From 502 to 556 A. D.

紀梁

1. 通大中 通大通普 監天 帝武

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Woo-te — Teën-këen, Poo-tung, Ta-tung, Chung-ta-tung . . .	502 A.D.

2. 簡文 大寶

3. 元帝 承聖

4. 敬帝 紹泰 太平

		Reigns commenced.
2.	Këen-wăn—Ta-paou . . .	550 A.D.
3.	Yuen-te—Ching-shing . . .	552
4.	King-te—Chaou-tae, Tae-ping	555

XI. THE CHIN DYNASTY.

From 557 to 558 A. D.

陳紀

1. 高祖 永定

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Kaou-tsoo—Yung-ting . . .	557 A.D.

2. 康天嘉天 帝文
 3. 大光 帝廢
 4. 建大 帝宣
 5. 明禎德至 主後

		Reigns commenced.
2.	Wăn-te—Tëen-këa, Tëen-kang	560 A.D.
3.	Fei-te—Kwang-ta . . .	567
4.	Seuen-te—Ta-këen . . .	569
5.	How-choo—Che-tih, Ching-ming	583

XII. THE SUY DYNASTY.

From 589 to 618 A.D.

紀 隋

1. 壽仁皇開 祖高

	Reigns commenced.
1. Kaou-tsoo—Kae-hwang: Jin-show	589 A.D.

2. 煬帝 大業

3. 恭帝 侑義寧

4. 恭帝 侗泰皇

		Reigns commenced.
2.	Yang-te—Ta-něě . . .	605 A.D.
3.	Kung-te-yew—E-ning . .	618
4.	Kung-te-tung—Hwang-tae .	618

XIII. THE TANG DYNASTY.

From 618 to 907 A. D.

唐 紀

1. 高祖 武德

2. 太宗 貞觀

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Kaou-tsoo—Woo-tih . . .	618 A.D.
2.	Tae-tsung—Ching-kwan .	627

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|----|----------|----|
| 3. | 德麟朔龍慶顯徽永 | 宗高 |
| 4. | 龍景龍神 | 宗中 |
| 5. | 極太雲景 | 宗睿 |
| 6. | 寶天元開 | 宗玄 |
| 7. | 應寶元上元乾德至 | 宗肅 |
| 8. | 曆大泰末德廣 | 宗代 |
| 9. | 元貞元興中建 | 宗德 |

Reigns
commenced.

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| 3. | Kaou-tsung—Yung-hwuy, Hëen-king, Lung-sö, Lin-tih . | 650 A.D. |
| 4. | Chung-tsung — Shin-lung, King-lung | 684 |
| 5. | Juy-tsung—King-yun, Tae-keih | 711 |
| 6. | Heuen-tsung — Kae-yuen, Tëen-paou | 713 |
| 7. | Suh-tsung — Che-tih, Kan-yuen, Shang-yuen, Paou-ying . | 756 |
| 8. | Tae-tsung—Kwang-tih, Müh-tae, Tae-teih | 763 |
| 9. | Tih-tsung—Keen-chung, &c. | 780 |

10. 貞永 宗順

11. 和元 宗憲

12. 慶長 宗穆

13. 厯寶 宗敬

14. 成開和太 宗文

15. 昌會 宗武

16. 中大 宗宣

17. 通咸 宗懿

		Reigns commenced.
10.	Shun-tsung—Yung-ching .	805 A.D.
11.	Hëen-tsung—Yuen-ho .	806
12.	Mŭh-tsung—Chang-king .	821
13.	King-tsung—Paou-leih .	825
14.	Wăn-tsung—Tae-ho, Kae-ching	827
15.	Woo-tsung—Hwuy-chang .	841
16.	Seuen-tsung—Ta-chung .	847
17.	E-tsung—Han-tung .	860

18 德文 啟光 和 中 明 廣 符 乾 宗 僖

19 化 光 寧 乾 福 景 順 大 紀 龍 宗 昭
祐 天 復 天

20. 祐 天 帝 宣 昭

Reigns
commenced.

18. He-tsung—Keen-foo, Kwang-ming,
Chung-ho, Kwang-ke, Wăn-tih 874 A. D.

19. Chaou-tsung—Lung-ke, Ta-shun,
King-füh, Keen-ning, Kwang-
hwa, &c. 889

20. Chaou-seuen-te—Tëen-yew 904

XIV. THE HOW, OR AFTER LĒANG DYNASTY.

From 907 to 923 A. D.

紀 梁 後

1. 化 乾 平 開 祖 太

Reigns
commenced.

1. Tae-tsoo—Kae-ping, Këen-hwa 907 A. D.

2. 梁主 眞 乾元貞明 龍德

Reign
commenced.

2. Leang-choo-tëen—Kan-hwa,
Ching-ming, Lung-tih . 913 A.D.

XV. THE HOW, OR AFTER TANG DYNASTY.

From 924 to 936 A. D.

後唐紀

1. 莊宗 同光

2. 明宗 天成 長興

3. 閔帝 應順

4. 廢帝 清泰

Reigns
commenced.

1. Chwang-tsung—Tung-kwang . 924 A.D.

2. Ming-tsung—Tëen-ching, Chwang-
hing . 927

3. Min-te—Ying-shun . 934

4. Fei-te—Tsing-tae . 934

XVI. THE HOW-TSIN DYNASTY.

From 936 to 946 A. D.

後晉紀

1. 高祖 天福

2. 出帝 開運

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Kaou-tsoo—Tëen-fuh . . .	936 A.D.
2.	Chuh-te—Kae-yun . . .	944

XVII. THE HOW-HAN DYNASTY.

From 947 to 950 A. D.

後漢紀

1. 高祖 乾祐

2. 隱帝 乾祐

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Kaou-tsoo—Këen-yew . . .	947 A.D.
2.	Yin-te—Këen-yew . . .	948

XVIII. THE CHOW-DYNASTY.

From 951 to 960 A.D.

後周紀

1. 太祖 廣順

2. 世宗 顯德

3. 恭帝 顯德

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Tae-tsoo—Kwang-shun . . .	951 A.D.
2.	She-tsung—Hëen-t'ih . . .	954
3.	Kung-te—Hëen-t'ih . . .	960

XIX. THE SUNG DYNASTY.

From 960 to 1279 A.D.

宋紀

1. 太祖 建隆 乾德 開寶

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Tae-tsoo — Këen-lung, Kan-tih, Kae-paou . . .	960 A. D.

2. 拱端熙雍國興平太 宗太

3. 符祥中大德景平咸 宗真

4. 元寶祐景道明聖天 宗仁

5. 平治 宗英

6. 豐元寧熙 宗神

7. 符元聖紹祐元 宗哲

	Reigns commenced.
2. Tae-tsung—Tae-ping, Hing-kwö, Yung-he, Twan-kung .	976 A.D.
3. Chin-tsung—Han-ping, King-tih, Ta-chung, Tseang-foo .	998
4. Jin-tsung—Téen-shing, Ming-taou, King-yew, Paou-yuen .	1023
5. Ying-tsung—Che-ping . .	1064
6. Shin-tsung—He-ning, Yuen-fung	1068
7. Chě-tsung — Yuen-yew, Shaou- shing, Yuen-foo . .	1086

8. 觀大寧崇國靖中建 宗徽

9. 康靖 宗欽

Reigns.
commenced.

8. Hwuy-tsung—Tsung-ning, &c. 1101 A. D.

9. Kin-tsung—Tsing-kang . 1120

SOUTHERN SUNG.

紀宋南

1. 興紹炎建 宗高

2. 熙淳道乾興隆 宗孝

3. 熙紹 宗光

Reigns
commenced.

1. Kaou-tsung—Keën-yen, Shaou-hing . 1127 A. D.

2. Hëaou-tsung—Lung-hing, Këen-taou, Shun-he . 1163

3. Kwang-tsung—Shaou-he . 1190

4. 定嘉禧開泰嘉元慶 宗寧

5. 熙嘉平端定紹慶寶 宗理

6. 淳咸 宗度

7. 祐德 宗恭

8. 炎景 宗端

9. 典祥 曷帝

		Reigns commenced.
4.	Ning-tsung—King-yuen, Kea-tae, Kae-he, Kea-ting . . .	1195 A.D.
5.	Le-tsung—Paou-king, Shaou-ting, Twan-ping, Kea-he . . .	1225
6.	Too-tsung—Han-shun . . .	1265
7.	Kung-tsung—Tih-yew . . .	1275
8.	Twan-tsung—King-yen . . .	1277
9.	Te-ping—Tsëang-hing . . .	1278

XX. THE YUEN DYNASTY.

From 1279 to 1367 A. D.

元 紀

1. 世祖 元至元

2. 成宗 元貞大德

3. 武宗 至大

4. 仁宗 皇慶延祐

5. 英宗 至治

6. 泰定帝 泰定致和

Reigns
commenced.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| 1. She-tsoo—Che-yuen | . | . | 1279 A.D. |
| 2. Ching-tsung—Yuen-ching, Ta-tih | | | 1295 |
| 3. Woo-tsung—Che-ta | . | . | 1308 |
| 4. Jin-tsung—Hwang-king: Yen-yew | | | 1312 |
| 5. Ying-tsung—Che-che | . | . | 1321 |
| 6. Tae-ting-te—Che-ho | . | . | 1324 |

7. 曆天 宗明

8. 順至 宗文

9. 正至元至統元 帝順

		Reigns commenced.
7.	Ming-tsung—Tëen-leih .	1329 A.D.
8.	Wăn-tsung—Che-shun .	1330
9.	Shun-te—Yuen-tung, Che-yuen, Che-ching . . .	1333

MODERN HISTORY.

FROM THE MING DYNASTY TO THE PRESENT REIGN.

A.D. 1368 to 1833.

XXI. THE MING DYNASTY.

From 1368 to 1644.

明 紀

1. 太祖 洪武

2. 建文 帝 建文

3. 太宗 永樂

4. 仁宗 洪熙

5. 宣宗 宣德

	Reigns commenced.
1. Tae-tsoo—Hung-woo . . .	1368 A.D.
2. Këen-wăn-te—Këen-wăn . . .	1399
3. Ching-tsoo—Yung-lö . . .	1403
4. Jin-tsung—Hung-he . . .	1425
5. Seuen-tsung—Seuen-tih . . .	1426

6. 順天統正 宗英

7. 泰景 帝景

8. 化成 宗憲

9. 治弘 宗孝

10. 德正 宗武

11. 靖嘉 宗世

12. 慶隆 宗穆

Reigns
commenced.

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 6. | Ying-tsung—Ching-tung, Tëen-shun . . . | 1436 A.D. |
| 7. | King-te—King-tae . . . | 1450 |
| | Ying-tsung (restored), Tëen-shun | 1458 |
| 8. | Hëen-tsung—Ching-hwa . . . | 1466 |
| 9. | Hëaou-tsung—Hung-che . . . | 1488 |
| 10. | Woo-tsung—Ching-tih . . . | 1506 |
| 11. | She-tsung—Kea-tsing . . . | 1522 |
| 12. | Muh-tsung—Lung-king . . . | 1567 |

13. 曆萬 宗神

14. 昌泰 宗光

15. 啓天 宗熹

16. 禎崇 宗懷

		Reigns commenced.
13.	Shin-tsung—Wan-leih .	1573 A.D.
14.	Kwang-tsung—Tae-chang	1620
15.	He-tsung—Tëen-ke . . .	1621
16.	Hwae-tsung—Tsung-ching	1628

XXII. THE TA-TSING DYNASTY.*

From 1644 to the present.

紀清大

1. 治順 帝皇章祖世

		Reigns commenced.
1.	Shun-che—She-tsoo-chang- hwang-te . . .	1644 A.D.

* Under this dynasty, the Kwō-haou is placed first; the long second names are the titles or epithets in the ancestral hall.

2. 康熙 帝皇仁祖聖

3. 雍正 帝皇憲宗世

4. 隆乾 帝皇純宗高

5. 慶嘉

6. 光道

Reigns
commenced.

2.	Kang-he — Shing-tsoo-jin- hwang-te . . .	1662 A.D.
3.	Yung-ching—She-tsung-hëen- hwang-te . . .	1723
4.	Këen-lung—Kaou-tsung-shun- hwang-te . . .	1736
5.	Këa-king . . .	1796
6.	Taou-kwang . . .	1821

CHAPTER V.

MYTHOLOGICAL ERA.

SAN-HWANG.—THE THREE EMPERORS.

THE annals of no nation give us an account of the creation of heaven and earth. God, the Author of all things, visible and invisible, holds no place in their vain imaginations, and therefore they do not ascribe to him the creation of all things. Sacred history alone contains a simple and satisfactory account of these subjects.

According to the most learned Chinese, the creation of the world is to be ascribed to the mutual operation of the male and female principles; heaven and earth began to exist by their generative power, and by the reciprocal generative power of both, all things were produced. Laou-keun says, “reason produced one, one produced two, two produced three, three produced all things.” We pass by the opinions of others, equally absurd.

When heaven and earth had been separated, Pwan-koo was born in the midst of them, and was thus enabled to know the height and depth both of earth and heaven. Pwan-koo also comprehended the way in which heaven and earth were created, and therefore it was said of him that he had divided heaven and earth. The Tae-keih (a Chinese nonentity) influenced the Yang and Yin principles; it was by Tae-keih that two forms were produced, and these two forms begat four semblances, by the interchange of which the forms of all kinds of things sprang into existence.

The three following personages are the celestial, terrestrial, and human emperors; whether these peculiar names are expressive of certain periods, or are given as the real names of persons, we cannot determine. Some authors consider them as emblematical of the creation—first of heaven, then of earth, and afterwards of man. These three lived for a long time, and begat a prodigious multitude of sons and daughters. Yew-tsaou-she taught the numerous progeny of his ancestors to build nests; for they were then unacquainted with the use of fire, drank the blood of animals, and dressed themselves in their skins: Suy-jin-she discovered the principles of fire by rubbing pieces of wood together till the flame issued forth. Food was

now properly dressed, and the people greatly delighted at this new improvement. As there did not yet exist any mode of writing, Suy-jin bound cords together, which served him for a memorandum. He also erected an arena for communicating instruction, and promoted mutual intercourse; thus people became more civilized.

WOO-TE—FIVE EMPERORS.

Fuh-he, considered as the founder of the Chinese empire, is the first of the Five Emperors. The nation was, during the preceding reign, so much increased as to require a governor. He fixed his capital at Hwa-seu, in Shense. It was his greatest endeavour to improve the condition of the people, therefore he taught them to rear cattle. At first, man differed very little from the beasts: "Though he might know his mother, he could not point out his father; his desires were unrestrained. In his sleep, he snored; when he rose, he yawned; when hungry, he ate as much as he could digest, and threw the remainder away. His dress consisted of the skins of animals, his drink their blood; but Fuh-he taught them to make nets and to rear domesticated animals. Observing the constant course of nature, he was

anxious to trace the original causes of her great revolutions ; he therefore invented a system, which, by combining the characters of the elements in an artificial way, expressed the changes in nature. He drew eight different lines, which he called the eight kwa ; these, multiplied by eight, produced a variety of lines, which, substituted for the originating causes of the changes in nature, clearly pointed out the combination of all things."

This, though nothing better than mere nonsense, without even a shadow of truth, has nevertheless exercised the ingenuity of the wisest Chinese. More useful were Fuh-he's endeavours to express thoughts by hieroglyphic signs. These are said to have originated in the drawing up of two linear tables, the Ho-too and the Lo-shoo, which he copied from the back of a dragon rising from the deep. He founded the celebrated city Chin-too, in Honan. By determining the seasons, he introduced order into the performance of business ; and to arouse the softer feelings of human nature, Fuh-he was anxious to teach his subjects music. He instituted marriage, which hitherto had been unknown, appointed negotiators of courtship, and regulated the government. After a life of about two centuries, he died, generally regretted. In this description of a good ruler, which is more

than a hundred times repeated by Chinese authors, we ought to distinguish fiction from reality. These were the first weak efforts made to reclaim man from a savage state. It is also very evident that the western part of China was first inhabited; however, the Chinese are too proud to admit that their ancestors emigrated from the West, probably from Hindoostan.

Shin-nung, the divine husbandman, taught his people to cultivate the ground; he invented the art of healing. To afford a ready sale for the produce of the country, Shin-nung established a fair, and then died, after a reign of 140 years. But man is not satisfied with the enjoyment of peace. The latter days of Shin-nung were embittered by war, which was excited by a prince of the imperial family, who was, however, defeated by Hëen-yuen, by whom the peace of the empire was again established. This prince then ascended the throne, under the name of Hwang-te, or "the Yellow Emperor." He at first had to maintain his power by force of arms; but, as soon as he had conquered his adversary, he turned his attention towards the improvement of his country. The population having considerably increased, Hwang-te sent colonies to the southern part of the present province of Pih-chih-le. This prince built a palace of brick; and, with the aid of a

man of great talents, increased the number of hieroglyphics, which he originally copied from the lines upon the back of a certain insect. He went still farther; and to fix his subjects upon the soil, built villages and cities, and introduced the utmost order amongst them. He, moreover, erected an observatory, and rectified the calendar; his empress, no less enterprising and inventive, succeeded in manufacturing silk, of which she made elegant robes of state. He invented arms, carts, boats, clocks, chariots, and an ingenious musical instrument; introduced coined money, and regulated the measures. According to this account, there remained very little room for improvement. It is, however, matter of wonder, that the antediluvians should have made so rapid a progress in the arts and sciences; but we may, perhaps, account for this, by supposing, that the Chinese historians are always anxious to refer entirely to antiquity, what has been the work of many ages.

Shaou-haou, his son and successor, was born under the influence of a star; the prevailing element of his nature was metal. The Chinese acknowledge five different elements, from which all things are composed. His reign was inglorious. However, he wished to signalize himself in the road of improvement, and observing a phenix, ordered all mandarins to wear

embroidered birds on their robes of state ; which custom is kept up to this day. He invented an air, with the express purpose of rousing the softer feelings of our nature, and promoting harmony. By his negligence, several weak-minded people were enabled to spread the superstitions of magical arts. His grave, as well as that of Hwang-te, is shown to this day.

Chuen-heuh, whose prevailing nature was water, resisted the growing superstition, and introduced a ritual for the service of Shang-te, the supreme emperor (or heavenly ruler.) Notwithstanding the great pains his predecessors had taken to rectify the calendar, he still discovered some errors. From him descended, in the third generation, the celebrated emperor Yu. This prince, anxious to profit by every thing, is celebrated for his ability to distinguish even distant objects, and is said to have possessed penetration to understand the most abstruse things. He followed heaven's course, and understood the unsettled minds of the people ; though benevolent, he was revered ; though indulgent, he was beloved. His great attention was directed towards the exercise of virtue, and the whole empire willingly submitted to his rule. During his reign took place a conjunction of five planets, in the constellation of Ying-shih. If we may believe the Chinese historians,

the empire was at that time as extensive as at the present moment, stretching southward to Cochin-china, and on the north to Tatar, whilst its eastern boundaries were the ocean.

Te-kuh established schools, and appointed able professors for the instruction of youth. Not satisfied with discouraging vice by exhortation, and example, he even promoted virtue by means of that useful instrument—a drum! He introduced polygamy by marrying four wives, three of whom were for a long time barren, but they appealed to Shang-te, and each of them became the mother of a son. Two of these princes are celebrated as the founders of the Shang and Chow dynasties.

Te-che, his eldest son, very unlike his father, lived only to satisfy his own desires, neglecting the government of the state, until at length the nobility, after many fruitless attempts to reform him, called his brother Yaou to the throne, which Te-che lost by his own faults.

THE REIGNS OF YAOU AND SHUN.

We are now arrived at a period which Confucius himself has delineated. It is the most prominent in all Chinese history, the whole government of the country being founded upon the

* See the Kangkëen-e-che-luh, vol. i.

institutions of these two emperors. Their example is elevated above that of all other princes, as if in them alone was original wisdom and virtue in perfection. The best monarchs are only humble imitators of their virtuous actions ; no one has surpassed, no one was ever equal to them. Their government having reached the summit of perfection, their successors are not expected to improve the art of government ; their utmost efforts scarcely sufficing to enable them to follow the glorious example of antiquity. Yaou the sage, and the divine Shun, have uttered so many excellent sayings, that people ought no more to think for themselves, but simply to adopt the wise maxims of those worthies. Confucius himself merely pretends to be a reformer of his nation, to have nothing original, and only to place the doctrines of these sages in a fuller light. Such, in short, is the veneration of the Chinese, that the greatest eulogium they can pass upon a ruler is to say, —“ You are a Yaou—or a Shun.” These patriarchs have survived many thousand years in the memory of millions ; their stern virtues, their filial piety are the admiration of all ages. We shall faithfully recapitulate their virtues, and simply state our conviction, that Confucius, wishing to draw a man of consummate virtue, invested with ideal perfection the rulers Yaou

and Shun, two chiefs famous in the ancient traditional history of the country. Later historians have invalidated Confucius's testimony in favour of their reigns, by ascribing to Hwang-te all the great inventions and improvements, which demonstrate, according to Confucius, the great original genius of Yaou and Shun.

Yaou began to reign in 2337 B. C. He was then very young, but his heart was penetrated by a benevolence as extensive as heaven; in prudence he equalled the most shrewd minds; the lustre of his intelligence shone like the sun in his glory; like the rain which descends from the clouds and fertilizes the country, his blessings were spread over the whole nation. All was simplicity, all was sincerity.

His mother observed a red dragon, and was delivered of him after fourteen months pregnancy. Few great men have found so renowned a biographer as Yaou. His actions, like those of the most celebrated princes, are recorded in the Shoo-king, a work compiled by Confucius, as we have already observed. With Yaou, the first Chinese cycle begins; from him the earliest Chinese annals are dated. The Shoo-king is too sententious, too abrupt, too obscure to be quoted as an incontrovertible authority. The reader has first to consult the commentary, and then to read the text, in order to understand its

contents. Yet it forms the great text-book, upon which all Chinese literati have expatiated; their philosophers have no new thoughts, they only comment upon the sententious maxims of the Shoo-king; even in Confucius's own sayings, there is scarcely any sentiment which is not hinted at in the Shoo-king. In this ancient book we find frequent allusion to the Supreme Being; he is referred to in the most solemn terms: to him is ascribed every good and perfect gift. This circumstance would inspire us with delight, and we should call to mind that period of primeval simplicity, when China was free from gross idolatry, did Confucius not inculcate, in plain terms, the worship of material heaven and earth, and make his heroes issue orders to do homage to the spirits of hills, rivers, seas, &c.—This latter doctrine is far the more explicit, whilst the former is never dwelt upon.

Yaou was frugal in his food, and almost mean in his dress; to study the happiness of his people was his sole business. Unwearied in his researches, he made annual tours throughout the empire; his arrival was anxiously looked for; his presence, as refreshing as that of the rain upon the parched soil. What he taught in words he inculcated by example. “Strive,” he said, “for wisdom, and render virtue conspicuous; show obedience to your superiors, be kind, be

condescending ; thus you will promote harmony, and all the nation will be happy.” Without effort he promoted virtue, his sole example being sufficient to render the whole nation virtuous ; “ virtue ran with the speed of a postilion ; and he thus ruled the nation as easily as he could turn a finger in the palm of his hand.”—A rare instance, and, if true, the only one in all history !

He commenced his reign with appointing two astronomers, *He* and *Ho*, to regulate the year, by adding intercalary months, and to point out the four seasons. The southern barbarians came to court and presented a divine tortoise, having upon its back characters, which recorded the history of the world from the beginning. This reign was remarkable for extraordinary and conspicuous omens ; there grew a plant, the leaves of which budded and faded according to the period of the moon. The phoenix and the ke-lin, a fabulous quadruped, which invariably appears, whenever there is a wise emperor at the head of government, rendered his reign exceedingly prosperous. Old and young sang odes in honour of their beloved sovereign. A man of Hwa-fung blessed him, by saying,—“ Shuy-yun, sage, possess riches, enjoy old age, and have many sons.” The emperor replied, “ I do not desire this, for wherever there are

many sons, there is also much to fear; where there is much riches, there is also much to do; and as for old age, it is a state of much disgrace." The old man replied—"Heaven has brought forth myriads of people, and must give them a government; if you have many sons you may entrust them with the government; if you have much riches, you may disperse them amongst the people; if the empire has a good government, you may harmonize with the spirit of the age; if the empire is ruled negligently, you may yourself cultivate virtue,—when you are a thousand years old, and tired with the world, ascend then on high and become a demi-god; ride upon the white clouds, retire to the imperial abode;—but do not rejoice at the disgrace of old age."

Yaou was anxious to choose a person who might sustain with him the burthen of empire. His choice fell upon Shun, a man belonging to the common people, who was renowned for his persevering filial piety, and rewarded by the emperor with the gift of his own two daughters in marriage.

There is an extraordinary catastrophe mentioned in the reign of Yaou, which is one of the greatest events in the history of mankind,—the deluge.—It is said the waters of the deluge rose higher and higher, till their wide expanse en-

circled the mountains and covered the summits. Mang-tsze (Mencius,) in speaking of the same event, remarks, that at the time of Yaou, the deluge had not yet entirely subsided ; the jungle and brushwood grew most luxuriantly, and the wild beasts were very numerous, so that the fine grain could not be cultivated. Yaou at first dispatched Kawn to remedy the evil ; and as he proved unsuccessful, he was replaced by his son Yu, who succeeded.

We do not doubt but this was the same flood recorded in sacred history, though we are not able to give the exact date from Chinese history ; nor do we hesitate to affirm, that China was peopled after the deluge, and that the reign of the three emperors is either allegorical or fabulous. The five emperors we consider as renowned chiefs ; Yaou, Shun, and Yu, the founders of the Shang dynasty, as the Chinese patriarchs. As these remote ages are enveloped in darkness, we attempt not to lift the veil by mere supposition, though we do not hesitate to affirm, that the Chinese nation, with all the Tatar tribes, descended from Shem, the blessed of God. The same almighty power, which guided those immense hordes of Tatars in swarming to the west, could also conduct a few families to the extremities of eastern Asia. The Chinese spread from the western to the eastern part of

the empire, and though no tradition is extant, we believe, that they are all of one and the same blood.

During the latter days of Yaou's reign, Shun performed the most arduous duties of the empire for twenty-eight years. Yaou reigned altogether ninety-nine years, a period never exceeded by any monarch; and finally, sunk into the grave, 2238 B. C.

Shun was descended from one of the preceding emperors, but his family being poor, he exercised alternately the trade of a husbandman, potter, and fisherman. He had a step-mother and a half-brother, both of whom combined with his father to disquiet him to the utmost. When he was already a colleague of the emperor, married to two beautiful females, and possessed numerous servants and riches, he pined away from being unable to conciliate the good-will of his parents. His unwearied love was repaid, however, by the most inveterate hatred. Once he was ordered by Koo-sow, his father, to ascend a barn; and as soon as he had reached the roof, the father took away the ladder, and set fire to the barn, in order to burn his son; Shun, however, escaped unhurt. At another time he was compelled to descend into a well, which was immediately covered by his brother Seang; but Shun escaped by a secret passage, while Seang,

ignorant of the fact, rejoiced at his having accomplished his unnatural design. He divided Shun's property, giving the cattle to his parents, and retaining for himself his bow, spear, shield, and musical instruments. He then proceeded to visit his sisters-in-law, whom he henceforth considered as his own wives; there he found, to his great astonishment, Shun sitting upon a bed, and playing the guitar; but recovering from his confusion at this unexpected sight, he said: "I longed to see you." Shun did not upbraid his brother with his horrible crime, but gave him an appointment in the government. For these and similar acts, Shun's filial piety is lauded to the skies; his example had a powerful influence over the whole nation, who were all transformed into dutiful children.

During the reign of Yaou, Shun's attention was directed towards the draining of marshes, in which the indefatigable Yu was engaged. China extended at that time, according to the ancient maps, from 23° to 40° of latitude, and from the 6th degree west from Peking to 19 degrees east. The imperial residence was then in Ke-choo, a territory east of Shan-tung, where Yu commenced the draining of the waters, and the confining of the rivers to their beds. This was a Herculean task, but Yu's wisdom and prudence were equal to it. He visited every

place, opened canals, drained marshes, led the smaller rivers into the ocean, burnt down the jungle and weeds, and thus rendered the empire habitable. But this was not all; he examined the nature of the soil, and easily discovered what it was best calculated to produce. Accordingly, he instituted land and other taxes, and ordered the barbarians to pay tribute.*

All this detail, may justly excite surprise; for those taxes are levied, not only on grain, and other things, which are necessary for the maintenance of human life, but on articles of the greatest luxury, which are only found amongst the most civilized nations. How a country, which was only a few years before reclaimed from marshes and jungle, could pay so great taxes, with scarcely any inhabitants upon it, we surely cannot explain. It is almost a hopeless task to reconcile all the accounts of the Shoo-king, in which truth is blended with traditional fictions. Besides these taxes, many tracts of lands were allotted for the maintenance of the court, others for the public weal; and some *hundred acres* for the habitation of barbarians.

The modest Shun, when he was called to participate in the throne, long refused so high an

* See the Shoo-king, Part. II. Chap. I.

honour, upon the plea of being unworthy to reign, but Yaou conferred upon him the dignity without the least hesitation ; yet Shun could not allow himself to be called emperor as long as Yaou lived. His first work was the construction of a sphere, in which the celestial bodies were indicated by precious stones of different colours. A similar sphere is still in the imperial observatory. When he entered upon his duty, he offered sacrifices to the supreme emperor, to hills and rivers, and to the whole host of heaven ; thus he was sure, that none of the minor divinities could be offended with him. How degraded are even the best of men ! On his tour through the empire, he paid respect to all the gods by continual sacrifices. These tours, though called hunts, were made with the sole object of examining into the state of the country, and redressing all kinds of grievances. He reduced the criminal laws to a code, which forms at this day the basis of the Chinese laws. Sze-ma-tsëen gives some examples of his punishments. To reform the northern barbarians, he sent Kwan-tow, an officer in disgrace, to the Tsung mountain. Kwan, who, without success, engaged in draining the marshes, was exiled to the Yu mountains. In order to render the southern savages more tractable, the San-meaou nation was sent thither, to esta-

blish colonies amongst them, whilst Kaou went amongst the eastern barbarians to teach them better manners. Thus he inflicted punishment in such a manner, as at the same time to render others happy. As punishments had hitherto been extremely barbarous, consisting in branding the face, cutting off both nose and ears, &c.; he abolished these inhuman modes of punishing, enacted effectual laws to prevent crime, and thus proved a great benefactor to his country. Chinese historians endeavour to persuade us, that during the time of Yaou and Shun, no capital crimes were committed, so great was the influence of a virtuous example; but if this had been the case, what necessity existed to abolish cruel punishments, which were never inflicted, and to create others equally severe, but not so revolting to human feelings?

When Yaou died, deeply regretted by all the people, Shun withdrew from office for three years, in order to bewail the loss of this great emperor, and to yield the throne to Yaou's son. But the people deserted the son of Yaou to follow Shun, with joy proclaiming him emperor, so that he at length reluctantly yielded to their wishes.

To record all the eulogiums bestowed upon Shun would be tedious; his reign was most peaceful, his subjects were virtuous. He raised to

great honours the descendants of the foregoing dynasty, who had long lived in obscurity. In order to see his actions in a true light, he permitted every body to accuse him, whenever he chose; his officers were kept in good order by a tribunal invested with the power of punishing and rewarding. He was not only wise, but also brave. Neither demons nor apparitions could terrify him, nor showers of rain, nor peals of thunder, make him tremble.

To lessen the cares of government, he associated Yu with himself upon the throne. Anxious to fulfil his duty towards the invisible powers, he appointed a minister to officiate at the sacrifices offered to heaven, earth, and the imperial ancestors. If Shun was so wise a prince, we doubt the veracity of his falling into so gross idolatry, as worshipping the material heaven and earth. It was his wish to make the most practical doctrines known to all the people, and therefore they were repeated in songs, and thus learnt from early infancy. Considering his ministers as his feet and hands, he was particularly anxious, that the executors of his commands should be trustworthy and zealous. To remind them of their duty, he pointed out to them the symbols in their robes of state. Some had a sun, moon, and stars embroidered upon them; "This," he said, "points out the

knowledge of which we ought to be possessed, in order to rule well. The mountains indicate the constancy and firmness of which we stand in need ; the dragon denotes, that we ought to use every means to inspire the people with virtue ; the beauty and variety of the colours of a pheasant remind us of the good example we ought to give, by practising the various virtues. In the upper robe, we behold six different kinds of embroidery, which are to remind us of the virtues to be engraven in our breast. The vase, which we are used to see in the hall of the ancestors, is a symbol of obedience and of filial piety ; the aquatic herb is a symbol of purity and disinterestedness ; the fire, of zeal and love for virtue ; the rice, of the plenty which we ought to procure for the people ; the hatchet is a symbol of justice in the punishment of vice ; and the dresses Foo and Fuh, are symbols of the discernment which we ought to have of good and evil."

We cannot repeat all his excellent sayings in his conversations with Yu, Kaou-yaou, and others, which are recorded in the Shoo-king—all relate to but one point, the practice of virtue ;—virtue is the sole source of happiness. On examining the translation of this work into French, we observe with regret that it is too much embellished, and that whole sentences are sup-

plied. However, a simple translation would be entirely unintelligible to the reader, the style being much too concise and antiquated.

Having established a hospital for the aged, by whose conversation he often profited, Shun died at Ming-teaou on one of his visits through the empire, in the 48th year of his reign, 2208, B. C.

CHAPTER VI.

HEA DYNASTY.

2207—1767, B. C.

YU, a very modest man, endeavoured to yield the throne to Shun's son, but the people repaired to him with their law-suits, the officers of government with such affairs as belonged to the state, and thus virtually declared him to be emperor. He had given a sufficient pledge of his capacity to govern by draining the marshes, dividing the lands, and introducing order and regularity into all branches of the administration. His filial piety was well tried; for it was he who stepped forth to save his father from ignominy by completing the work which he had failed to accomplish.

His birth, like that of every Chinese hero, was miraculous. His mother saw a shooting star, and dreamt that she swallowed some pearl barley, at the moment she conceived. When he was grown up, he measured nine feet two inches. His strength was surpassed by his courage. He heeded not the numerous serpents

and tigers, but encountered them boldly, when he was clearing the land from jungle. It was his maxim to provide abundantly for the wants of the people. He taught them to sow the five grains, and to attend to the nature of the soil, and the changes of the seasons, in all their agricultural pursuits. Solid virtue, and stern honesty, joined to a cautious temper, were according to his opinion the requisites of a good governor. He imitated his predecessors in considering music as the means of inspiring the softer feelings of nature, and promoting harmony amongst the nation. The ancient music of the Chinese must have been far superior to that of their posterity, for we cannot conceive, how such harsh sounds, and such miserable instruments, as we now see in use, could be productive of the desired effect. When he made his tours through the country, he summoned the principal officers to render an account of their administration, and to give them his salutary lessons.

When Shun was about to associate him with himself upon the throne, he addressed him in the following manner :—

“ Come here, Yu, thou hast proved faithful, and merited well in draining the land. Thou art the only sage. Thou hast shown thyself diligent in regulating the country ; in regulating

thy own family, thou has been careful. Be not puffed up by vain conceit; but the empire is not envious of thy power, for thou art not vain. Thou seest that I encourage merit and praise deserts, and therefore thou art to succeed me upon the throne, for to thee belongs this august rank."

Thus encouraged, Yu could address his officers in equally strong language.—“ Be circumspect,” he said; “ this will save you much anxiety. Never transgress the law, never study your ease, never be drowned in pleasure. Trust yourselves entirely to the guidance of sages. Never act in opposition to the will of the people, in order to honour your own whims. Be neither slothful nor negligent, and even the barbarians of the four quarters of the globe will acknowledge you as their rulers.” The officers frequently replied, and many a wise maxim was uttered during those meetings: we know not, however, how far they practised, what they so readily approved. Many of the maxims are worthy of the consideration of all princes; they are the fruits of good, sound sense, and speak highly for the wisdom of those who uttered them. But Yu did not only profit by the advice of his ministers; the simple remark of a common rustic drew his attention. To prevent oppression in every shape, and to gain the ne-

cessary advice in government affairs, he caused a bell to be placed at the gate of the palace; whosoever wished to converse with him upon civil affairs, sounded it, and was immediately admitted. A tablet of iron invited the people to complain of any grievances, which might have been occasioned by the oppressive measures of their magistrates. There were likewise leaden and stone tablets, to induce the wise throughout the empire to come and advise him on subjects of law, ministerial affairs, &c. He was deeply grieved, when he met, in one of his tours, the body of a man, who had been assassinated; but instead of threatening vengeance, he blamed himself for not having prevented such a cruel act by a paternal and efficient government.

Though Yu had already arrived at the age of ninety-three years, when he ascended the throne, he was still vigorous in establishing good institutions, and fully deserves the epithet of Ta, "Great," which has been bestowed upon him.

In order to perpetuate the results of his researches, he caused the map of the nine provinces into which he had divided the empire, to be engraven upon large vessels of brass. These were viewed by the Chinese with superstitious veneration, and whoever possessed them, considered himself invested with sovereign power. To add greater dignity to the title of monarch, he com-

bined the functions of a high priest with imperial majesty. All the succeeding emperors of China have exercised the sacerdotal functions, and continued to offer sacrifices to heaven and earth.

Ta (the Great,) Yu, died after a reign of seven years, 2198 B. C. His name will always rank high in the pages of Chinese history ; nor deserves such a prince to be forgotten in the annals of nations.

In the preceding relation, we have nothing recorded except what is well founded upon the authority of Chinese historians, whose great defects are sameness and partiality. None of the distinguishing characteristics are drawn with an historical hand. Yaou, Shun, and Yu, are virtuous ; they act from the same motives, and in the same way. Viewing them as common mortals, liable to the frailties of their own kind, we should have expected a faithful representation of their errors and faults, in a station of life, where the most perfect of men cannot be entirely exempt from blame ; but we read of no blemishes in their character. We cannot imagine, that a nation like the Chinese, just emerging from barbarism, should all at once make such rapid strides towards perfection ; this is the utopian march of intellect.—Yet, notwithstanding these reasonable doubts respect-

ing the entire truth of those annals, we are ready to confess that these three rulers, Yaou, Shun, and Yu, were great men, appointed by God to become the founders of the largest nation in the world.

In the course of this history, we shall pass over in silence those emperors, whose reigns were not remarkable for any extraordinary event, in order to avoid a tiresome detail of trivial occurrences.

2197 B. C. Te-ke, the son of Yu, succeeded to the throne. Contrary to the examples of the two preceding reigns, he was chosen successor by the unanimous voice of the people and the mandarins, because he was a wise prince, and worthy of the throne of his father. All the mandarins repaired to court to do homage to the new emperor, who received them with the greatest kindness. There was only one tributary prince, who refused to acknowledge Te-ke as his liege lord; yet Te-ke would have forgiven him, had he not in the meanwhile ravaged a part of the Se-gan district in Shense. In consequence of this act, he assembled the tributary princes, and addressed them in the following manner:—"I have called you hither to inform you of the rebellion of Yew-she; this man, without any regard to the production of the five elements, which contribute towards the main-

tenance and subsistence of the people, ravages the whole of the Kan country (the name of the present province of Se-gan); he sets at defiance the three principal duties, viz. the homage due to Heaven, the respect due to the prince, and the love due to the people. He has not come here to acknowledge me as his liege lord. He has not, however, offended me, but the gods; for I have received this dignity from Heaven. Heaven wills, that I take revenge, and that I deprive him of the life of which he has made so bad a use. In obedience to the orders of Heaven, I wish to lead my troops against him, prepare every thing speedily, I wish to enter upon the execution of my design." Such language is even to this day frequently held by the Chinese government under similar circumstances. His soldiers, well equipped, marched into the field, the battle was decisive, Yew-she was defeated, and disappeared. Thus the peace of the country was speedily restored.

Tae-kang, the eldest son of Te-ke, began his reign in 2188 B. C. He was so addicted to hunting, that he ravaged the lands of his subjects, and rendered himself highly odious to the nation. E, a governor of a district, remonstrated with him, but to no purpose. He therefore assembled an army, defeated the emperor, and placed his brother, Chung-kang, upon the

throne. An ode, contained in the classical collection, — the She-king, commemorates this event. Tae-kang lost the empire, because he did not observe the wise maxims of his grandfather. As long as Tae-kang lived, Chung-kang refused to assume the imperial title; but as soon as he was informed of his death, he ascended the vacant throne. The negligence and debauchery of the two astronomers, He and Ho, obliged him to wage war against them. To march an army, however, against two astronomers, who had failed to record an eclipse, is rather an extraordinary undertaking. His general, Ying-how, defeated, and killed them. This success roused the envy of E, who had deposed the former emperor; which grievously afflicted the sovereign, who loved his people, and was anxious to mend his past faults, in order to render them virtuous. He went so far as to invite the people, by a bell, to observe the defects of government, and if any body had suggested measures for improvement, to make them known; in case of neglect, the people were severely punished. However, he did not live long enough to see the consequences of this proceeding. His son, Te-seang, was a monarch of very humane disposition, but wanted the talent for governing an empire. Several bodies of banditti, with Yew-she at their head, had combined to ravage

the country. E routed them ; but, puffed up by success, he presumed upon the weakness of Te-seang, and usurped the whole government of the empire. Te-seang had no other alternative but submission or flight. He withdrew for some time from the capital ; but being prevailed on to return, he again became a slave to his minister, who leagued with a mean individual called Han-tseh, in order to undermine the throne. Han-tseh, a man of crafty and subtle character, ambitious of the splendours of royalty, killed E during a hunting excursion, and instigated Keaou, the son of E, to wage war against the emperor, in order to revenge the death of his father, whom he declared to have been assassinated by the emperor's creatures. Keaou vanquished the imperial forces, killed the emperor, and marched victoriously into the capital. The empress was then pregnant, and escaped the general slaughter, 2119 B. C. Very soon afterwards, she brought forth a son, whom she carefully hid. After eight years, her retreat was betrayed to Han-tseh, but the careful mother sent her son into the mountains ; and when he was even there discovered, she procured for him the office of a kitchen-boy in the palace of the governor of Yu. When here, his birth was discovered by this sagacious governor, and he was sent to another place, Lo-fun, a desert. Here he

rallied many people around him. By his virtuous actions he gained their affection, and influenced their conduct in such a manner, that even the desert became a paradise. This attracted the notice of the governors in the neighbourhood, who were greatly astonished to see so young a man gifted with such great qualities. Having joined his party, whilst the empress interested many nobles who lived at court in his behalf; they combined their respective forces, and marched against Han-tsu, whom they defeated in a pitched battle. He, another chief, was slain by the emperor's son Choo, and Te-shaou then ascended the throne. He reigned peacefully 22 years, and was followed in

2037 B. C. by Te-choo, an excellent prince. During the usurpation of Han-tsu, great abuses had arisen, and the whole nation had degenerated. Te-choo laboured to reform these abuses, but the evil had taken too deep a root. He was followed by Te-hwae. During the reigns of Te-hwae, Te-mang, Te-sëe, Te-puh-këang, Te-keung, Te-kin, Te-kung-këa, Te-kaou, and Te-fa, nothing remarkable occurred, but the empire decayed more and more, and the posterity of Yu fell into disrepute.

Këe-kwei, or simply Këe, ascended the throne in 1818 B.C. He was one of the worst princes who ever ruled China. Historians

have, perhaps, dwelt too much upon his vices, and not mentioned even one redeeming quality ; but they cannot keep the due medium ; their heroes are virtuous to perfection,—their tyrants monsters of iniquity.

Këe was naturally vicious. He saw the decline of the imperial authority, and endeavoured to chastise the unruly nobles. Yew-she, governor of Mung-shan, saw the tempest approaching, and in order to avert it, gave his daughter, Mo-he, an artful crafty woman, to Këe. Charmed with her appearance, Këe abandoned all thoughts of war. In order to please her, he built a room coated with jasper ; all the furniture was adorned with precious stones ; and in this place he celebrated the orgies of the most degraded licentiousness. In his court he had piles of meat, and ponds of wine, to which he invited his votaries to indulge in all kinds of excesses. History ought never to have dwelt upon the monstrous debaucheries, which were here practised without shame or reluctance. A minister, who remonstrated with his sovereign, was beheaded ; upon this, E-yin, another faithful servant, withdrew, which occasioned murmuring throughout the nation. Ching-tang, a descendant of Hwang-te, was highly displeased with the proceedings of his sovereign, who grew daily worse ; and with the extreme cruelty with which he treated

his subjects. As he held an hereditary barony, that of Shang, of the crown, he afforded an asylum to all the faithful ministers of the emperor, who were forced from the presence of their lord. E-yin advised Ching-tang to dethrone the monster. Ching-tang at first refused, but being overcome by the solicitations of the multitude, he took up arms; protesting, that he was not seeking his own advantage, but only executing the decree of Heaven. The Supreme Emperor, he said, has rejected Këe; I go to punish him for his crimes; cleave to me to the last. The two armies coming in sight, Këe suffered a defeat, and surrendered himself to the victor; but feigning repentance, he only prayed that his life might be spared. Ching-tang willingly left him in possession of the throne, and returned to his own principality. Këe promised to reform his past errors. But scarcely was he again seated upon the throne, when he relapsed into his former enormities, and threatened to revenge himself upon Tang. But Tang again marching with a numerous army against the faithless monarch, the imperial troops, at the sight of the enemy, threw down their arms and fled. Këe escaped, and, forsaken by the whole world, died an ignominious death in exile, 1766. The last scion of the Hëa dynasty, Chan-wei, son of Këe, retired to the

northern deserts, where he ended his life amongst savages. Ching-tang, therefore, ascended the throne, and became the founder of the Shang dynasty. This revolution was accompanied by signs from Heaven. The whole globe trembled, a mountain sank into the earth, the stars lost their lustre, &c.

A retrospect of the events of the western world is necessary, to combine with this history.

Whilst all the descendants of Noah gradually relapsed into idolatry, God chose one family, as the depository of a pure religion. Abraham, the friend of God, enjoyed communion with his Creator; and Isaac and Jacob followed in the footsteps of the father of the faithful.

God, at the same time, raised up another ancient empire, not inferior to China in the arts of civilised life. — Egypt, a mere valley along the banks of the Nile, emerged rapidly from obscurity. Between these two empires some have discovered a very great resemblance. In both, agriculture and astronomy were highly prized, respect for superiors inculcated, parents held in honour, and a hieroglyphic mode of writing adopted. Among the Egyptians, the most degrading superstitions prevailed; while the Chinese had a political religion of mere forms. In both nations the worship of the dead obtained. Some have traced the origin of the Chinese to

a colony of Egyptians ; forgetting that similar causes produce similar effects, and that nations will spontaneously adopt rites and customs, similar to those of other people, by the mere impulse of human nature.*

Phœnicia, another state well deserving our notice, contributed towards the civilization of the world, and ranked high among the mighty empires of Western Asia. Phœnicia united the most distant nations by the common interest of trade ; and therefore greatly contributed to improve the condition of the most distant maritime countries. The Assyrian monarchy, founded by Nimrod, the great hunter, was also contemporary. In Eastern Asia, we observe the greatest monotony ; the most civilized part is one great mass ; whilst Western Asia and Northern Africa exhibit a pleasing variety, and a multitude of states, each striving for superiority.

* See St. John's " Egypt and Mohammed Ali," vol. ii. pp. 37—132, where the character and civilization of the ancient Egyptians, as far as they can be discovered from history and their own architectural monuments, are investigated and compared with those of other ancient nations.

CHAPTER VII.

SHANG DYNASTY.

1766—1122 B. C.

As soon as Ching-tang had entered upon the duties of government, he called the princes and people together. “Këe, or Hea,” he said, “has committed crimes; Heaven has rejected him. The Supreme Emperor knows the heart: if you commit faults, I am responsible for them; if I transgress, I shall not forgive myself, and you are by no means responsible for my faults. Assist me in establishing peace, concord, and virtue.”

None of the other emperors mention so frequently the name of Shang-te, the Supreme Emperor; nor does any one of them seem to have been penetrated by so great an awe of him as Ching-tang. However, having usurped the throne, it was requisite to give reasons for this unprecedented action; there being no higher power to appeal to than the Supreme Emperor, whose apparent sanction alone could authorize such an act. For this reason, Ching-tang con-

stantly referred to the Judge of the universe ; others, however, have done the same thing with much less justice. He commenced his reign with a solemn sacrifice, and again invoked Heaven.

During his reign occurred a drought, which lasted seven years. Streams and rivers were dried up, and the whole soil was parched. People ascribed this calamity to certain demons, who grasped the clouds in their hands, and thereby prevented the falling of the rain. Notwithstanding the scantiness of the harvest, none were reduced to starvation ; for Tang had so admirably regulated affairs, that there was always a quantity of grain remaining in the store-houses. He had also diminished the taxes, and encouraged the people to be zealous in the cultivation of the arid ground, the produce being entirely their own. When, however, after long waiting, no rain fell, Tang consulted with his ministers, and went out in procession to a mountain, without the pageant of monarchy. Here he entreated Heaven not to punish the nation, because of his offences. He freely acknowledged his transgressions, and rain descended immediately in showers. His acts of benevolence, after so signal a proof of the merciful interposition of Providence, were very numerous ; the people were astonished at his unwearied bene-

volence, and Tang was called the well-beloved sovereign.

1753. Tae-këa, his successor, was chosen emperor by E-yin, the celebrated minister, who had aided Tang in conquering the empire. At his coronation, E-yin convoked the states, and whilst praising the virtues of the illustrious ancestors of the young king, he addressed the prince in the following manner:—"The first emperors of the Hëa dynasty were celebrated for their virtue; Heaven did not, therefore, visit them with any calamity; their posterity degenerated, and righteous Heaven, in chastisement of their crimes, transferred the empire to your family. Your majesty is the heir of the virtues of your ancestors; imitate them by being careful in promoting love between relations, and respect towards superiors. Begin to practise this in your own family, and end by promoting it throughout the four seas." Tae-këa having heard this admonition, bowed his head, and said: "I, a little child, am not well versed in the practice of virtue; I am unsettled, and cannot keep the measure; I offend heedlessly, and rush into crimes." He spoke the truth. Being prone to vice, he refused any longer to listen to the wise instructions of E-yin, who, when he saw that mere words were of no effect, took Tae-këa prisoner, and confined him in the cata-

combs of his ancestors. Here he was immured with his wife and concubines, and had sufficient time to bewail his errors, to repent, and to form good resolutions, having his deceased parent constantly before him. When he had duly reformed, after many years of repentance, he was restored to his throne, and died in 1721 B. C.

In the reign of Wuh-ting, the faithful E-yin died, 1713. The greatest honours were bestowed upon him, and his funeral was celebrated with all the pomp due to a sovereign. He left a disciple, Kew-tan, who was instructed in all the branches of administration, and proved worthy of so great a master. During the reigns of the emperors Tae-kang, Seaou-këa, and Yung-ke, nothing remarkable happened; but the vigour of the Shang princes greatly decayed. Tae-woo, who ascended the throne in 1637 B. C. was greatly grieved at the loss of all authority. Two trees grew up within one night, the stems increased to a considerable thickness in seven days, and in other three days decayed. Greatly astonished at such an extraordinary event, he consulted two of his ministers. E-chi, who was one of them, answered:—"Calamity may be averted by governing virtuously, and by affectionately cherishing the people." Tae-woo did not forget this lesson, and thenceforth paid no attention to omens, but contented himself with

governing well. He erected hospitals, or alms-houses for the aged, where they were very well provided for; prevented the mandarins from oppressing the people; and thus established his authority upon a firm basis—the love of his subjects.

During the reign of Chung-tang, extending from 1562 to 1548 B. C., the barbarians made great inroads into the empire, and were with difficulty subdued. The frequent inundations of the Yellow River, compelled him to remove his capital to the province of Honan. The reigns of Wae-jin, 1534 B. C., Ho-tan-käa, 1525 B. C., Tsou-yih, 1525 B. C., Tsou-sin, 1506, B. C., Wuh-käa, 1490 B. C., Tsou-ting, 1465 B. C., Nan-kang, 1433 B. C., and of Yang-käa, 1408 B. C., were so inglorious as scarcely to deserve our notice.

Pwan-kang made a desperate effort to crush the insolence of the mandarins, and to free the people from constant oppression. He removed the capital to the Yin district in Honan, and changed the name of the dynasty to Yin. The people were reluctant to remove to a new place of abode, but the sagacious remarks of the emperor greatly contributed to lead them into obedience. Seaou-sin, the successor of Pwan-kang, subverted the good institutions which his brother had introduced. He was a prince, who lived entirely for his pleasure, and greatly con-

tributed to hasten the ruin of the country. His successor, Seaou-yih, was likewise an indolent and worthless prince, who ascended the throne in 1352. But whilst the Shang family decayed, there arose another dynasty, which very soon restored the empire to its former lustre. Koo-kung, the patriarch of his family, who was a descendant of the former emperors, removed from his native country, Pin, to Ke, in Shense province. His good government attracted crowds of people from all quarters, to reside under so wise and lenient a ruler. Koo-kang established regular tribunals to facilitate the affairs of government; all his institutions bespeak his great wisdom; he was a prince so generally beloved, that the whole empire looked up to him. Within a short time, the number of inhabitants of his new founded city amounted to 300,000.

Woo-ting began to reign in 1324 B. C. He had a wise minister, to whom he entirely entrusted the affairs of the empire, and withdrew himself from the administration of government. When the time of mourning for his parent had expired, the officers of state requested him to resume his authority; but he refused to follow their advice, unless some sage minister were at his side to guide his counsels. Whilst his whole mind was taken up with a consciousness of his incapacity to rule, he dreamt that he saw a man,

capable of filling the post of prime minister. The image of this great man, whom he had seen in a dream, being deeply impressed upon his mind, he drew it, and sent some of his officers in search of this extraordinary personage. As might have been expected, it was some time before they found him ; but at last, chance brought them in contact with a mason, whom they thought capable of rebuilding the state, and conducted him to the emperor, who immediately recognised him, as the man he had seen in his dream. Woo-ting, struck with this marvellous event, and recognising the will of Heaven in bringing to him so wise a man, addressed him, in the presence of all his ministers, in the following manner:—" I appoint you my prime minister ; teach me constantly what I ought to know ; be to me what a whetstone is to iron, an oar to a boat, a shower in a drought. Communicate to me the treasures which your heart contains ; hide from me nothing, and never hesitate to blame me. If a medicine does not a little indispose a sick man, and cause head-ache, how can the patient be restored ?" Foo-yue gave his sage advice, which occupies many pages of the Shoo-king. We are rather astonished to find in a mason so thorough a knowledge of political affairs, but still more, how so long a speech could be transmitted by tradition to

posterity. No doubt, Confucius took great liberties in composing the history of olden times. However this may be, Foo-yue kept his word, and not only gave good advice, but succeeded also in the execution of all useful measures. During this reign the first ambassadors arrived from an unknown country, in order to do homage to the Son of Heaven. Under all the celebrated emperors, the adjacent barbarian states sent an annual tribute as a token of their vassalage. If they refused, they were considered as rebels, and the emperor sent an army against them. In process of time, the celestial empire extended its views, and considered all nations, though their existence were unknown, as its vassals. Hence their pretensions to tribute and subjection to their authority.

Woo-ting reigned in peace, and received after his death the honourable name of Kaou-tsung. His son, Tsoo-kang, began to reign in 1265, and was an idle and vicious prince; whose younger brother, Tsoo-këa, however, was still worse. In consequence, the Shang dynasty declined more and more in political importance. During the reign of this prince was born the celebrated Wan-wang, father of the founder of the Chow dynasty, and grandson of Koo-kung. The state increased continually in prosperity, and the people became more and more attached to the

Chow family. Two worthless princes, Lin-sin, 1223 B. C., and Kang-ting, 1219 B. C., the successors of Tsoo-kea, rendered the Shang family still more despicable. Woo-yih, who ascended the throne in 1198 B. C., feared neither Heaven nor man. He removed the capital to Ho-pih, in Honan. On his way thither, he discovered a statue, and used his power of canonization to bestow upon it the rank of an idol. But finding that his prayers were not answered, he grew enraged, and destroyed it. Imagining that the Deity would not listen to his supplications, he discharged a great many arrows towards the azure heavens, and by suspending several vessels of blood, which were so contrived as to let the fluid out, he persuaded the people of his having hit and wounded the object of his wrath. For this impiety, he was struck dead by lightning. The people, in the meanwhile rebelled, whilst the Chow family grew more and more popular. It was under this reign, that some malcontents, wearied with numerous oppressions, emigrated from China to the adjacent isles,—perhaps Japan.

Tae-ting, his successor, being anxious to reform abuses, employed the Chow family in the highest stations of government; but he himself was a weak prince. His son, Te-yih, greatly resembled his father. Wan-wang, the father of

the celebrated Woo-wang, was his prime minister. To this man was confided all the cares of government, and he did not betray the high confidence reposed in him. During the reign of this prince there happened an earthquake, which being felt in the territory of Chow, the people considered it an evil omen, intimating, that the ruin of Shang was decreed by Heaven.

Chow-sin, the last emperor of this family, ascended the throne in 1134 B. C. He was naturally of a cruel and restless disposition. Being a man of powerful mind and strong passions, he very soon excelled in all kinds of wickedness. The endeavour to put any restraint on his violent passions, was without avail; and his vices were rather nourished by Tan-ke, an infamous, but beautiful woman. Every vice found in her an advocate and promoter. She imitated the shameless concubine of Këe, by publicly exhibiting the most abominable scenes of debauchery. There was a garden of stags, splendidly adorned, where these orgies of lust were nightly celebrated. But her cruelty was still greater than her licentiousness. Seeing that the court and the whole family had fallen into contempt, she inveighed against the lightness of punishments; and, to remedy the evil, made an iron vessel, which, when heated red-hot, the criminal was obliged to hold in his hands till they

were roasted. She also erected a brass pillar, which being greased or daubed with unctuous matter, and made slippery, was laid over a fire. Across this pillar the criminal was compelled to walk, until, after many vain efforts, he fell into the flames, which afforded the greatest delight to Tan-ke.

The emperor Chow was equally ferocious. He ripped up the belly of a female, that he might behold the foetus in the womb; and with his own hands murdered a lady, who refused to comply with his inordinate desires. On a cold morning, seeing several persons walking over the ice, he thought them very hardy, and ordered their legs to be cut off, that he might inspect the marrow of their bones. Wan-wang, his minister, the father of Woo-wang, remonstrating against these enormities, was thrown into prison, where he perfected the Yih-king, the symbolical book of the Chinese. His son, Woo-wang, greatly dejected at the sufferings inflicted on his father, sent a beautiful female to the tyrant, who, captivating him with her charms, procured the liberty of the minister. When several governors had taken up arms to rid themselves of such a monster, Wan-wang opposed their design, and re-established the peace of the empire. Having arrived at a very old age, he called to him Se-pih Fa, his son

(afterwards Woo-wang), and said : “ I am about to die ; remember the last words of your father ; there are three things, which I wish to recommend to you. When there is an opportunity for doing well, do not postpone it ; be anxious to correct your own faults, and be indulgent towards others ; when there is occasion for acting, act :—this is the foundation of virtue.” Wan-wang is greatly celebrated in the classical odes of China, where his wisdom is highly extolled and recommended. There is still a picture of his observatory extant.

The grandees in Honan province very soon revolted. Woo-wang marched against them ; but instead of finding them hostile, they earnestly besought him to free the people from such a worthless prince. Woo-wang now began, though with some hesitation, to yield to their wishes. The rumour of a general defection spread rapidly. Tsoo-e, a faithful adherent, admonished the emperor to oppose the rebellion ; Chow laughed at the idea of being terrified by vain reports. Pe-kan, Chow’s faithful minister, frankly reproved the prince for his lethargy ; Chow did not forget it. “ I have heard,” he said, “ that a sage’s heart has seven apertures ; Pe-kan considers himself a sage ;” and he had the heart of Pe-kan immediately torn out, in order to inspect it. As Ke-tsze, another minister,

did not approve of this cruel treatment of his colleague, he was degraded to the rank of a slave, and confined in a close prison, where he feigned madness.

Woo-wang's patience was finally exhausted. He offered a great sacrifice to Shang-te, invoked Heaven as a witness of the justice of their cause, and became the leader of the rebellious nobles, who were already in arms, 1122 B. C. The speeches he delivered on this occasion, are given at full length in the Shoo-king. By these the courage of his soldiers being raised to the highest pitch, they all joined in expressing their wish to second Woo-wang in overthrowing the tyrant. At the dawn of day the two armies came in sight of each other, at Muh-yay; for Chow, when he finally learnt that Woo-wang was in earnest, had brought together an innumerable army, whose spears appeared like a forest of trees. Woo-wang, with a steady pace, made the attack; the imperial troops were thrown into disorder, one regiment pressing upon another, till a general confusion ensued, in which so many were slain, according to the Shoo-king, that the blood flowed like rivulets. Chow-sin, thinking every thing lost, fled into the palace, and after having adorned himself, like another Sardanapalus, with precious stones, set the whole pile on fire. His son, Woo-kang, went forth to meet Woo-

wang, riding chained in a cart, with a coffin at his side. The conqueror received him kindly, freed him from his chains, and burnt the coffin. Tan-ke, fearing for her life, put on her best ornaments, and proceeded towards the enemy, in the hope of enchanting the victor by her charms. On the way, she was met by the soldiers of Woo-wang, who had been sent to extinguish the fire in the palace. The officers arrested and chained her, and she was executed, according to Woo-wang's orders, as the cause of all the evils inflicted on the empire.*

* See the Hëa-Shang-ho-chuen, a very amusing work little known. — Shoo-king, vol. i. Sze-ma-tsëen, vol. i.; Kang-këen-e-che, vol. i.; and, de Mailla's *Histoire Generale de la Chine*.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHOW DYNASTY.

FROM 1122—249 B. C.

BEFORE Woo-wang (the martial king) seized the reins of government, he consulted Lew-chang, an experienced minister, who had fled from the tyrant, in order to save his life. This sage entirely approved of his measure, and quieted the fears of the people, who had escaped in terror to the mountains. When he entered the capital in triumph, great crowds thronged to see their new sovereign. His noble appearance, united with great affability, won the hearts of all spectators. In the imperial palace he found immense treasure, which he distributed among the soldiers. The great number of women, who were confined in the harem, he sent back to their families; and, in order to conciliate all parties, he issued a proclamation, declaring, that he was not come to abolish the good institutions of Shang, but to establish them more firmly. Wishing to show plainly,

that he had not waged war with the family of Shang, but rather with its vices and vicious princes, he employed Woo-kang, Chow-sin's son, as governor of a district. But he committed one great error, which had the most baneful consequences, by instituting, or rather re-establishing, the five orders of nobility, and allotting them so much land as was sufficient for their maintenance. This measure was productive of all the evils of the feudal system, which disturbed the welfare of the country for many centuries. But had he stopt here, the evil might have been less. He was, however, misguided by a false generosity, and hoped, by bestowing large principalities upon his own relations and the descendants of the former emperors, to attach them to his person. Accordingly there arose seventy-one governments, which very soon rendered themselves independent, and waged war against each other. China thus suffered from the same evil, which has desolated Germany for many centuries.

The man, who had shed tears over the grave of Pan-ke, was anxious to imitate the wisdom of that minister, whose fate he deeply deplored. All his utensils, his walls and avenues, he inscribed with wise maxims, that he might be constantly incited to the practice of virtue. The Chinese have still this practice of posting up in

their rooms moral sentences ; however, the most impressive sayings often loose their influence upon the heart, and are only retained on paper.

Woo-wang was not able to reconcile all parties. Two faithful servants of Shang chose rather to starve in a desert, than come over to their new sovereign. Another prince, or rather minister, called Ke-tsze, preferred living in exile in Korea to the office of prime minister, because he was attached to Shang, and could not serve him, who had subverted the dynasty. When he afterwards visited China, he found the capital of Shang forsaken, so that the grass grew in the streets ; for Woo-wang had removed the court to Haou in Shense. He wept over this desolation, and made some verses to commemorate it.

When the barbarians heard, that so wise a prince sat upon the throne, they sent tribute, tendering their submission. Amongst the rarities were some large dogs. Woo-wang's brother blamed the emperor for receiving such useless articles, and the ambassadors were ordered to bring henceforth only useful things to the court.

He had also his weaknesses. When he was dangerously ill, he consulted the destinies for his recovery, instead of praying to that God, who had placed him upon the throne.

Ching-wang, his son, was still very young, when he was called to the throne, 1115 B. C. To

fit him for so high a station, Chow-kung, the brother of Woo-wang, was intrusted with his education ; who laid down, in a treatise written on purpose, all the wise maxims, which can form the mind of a young prince. He was instructed in all the arts, and in the use of arms. His conduct was narrowly watched ; even in his retirement he was not freed from strict surveillance. His outward manners were strictly formed according to the rules of Chinese etiquette. To influence his heart by example, Chow-kung recited the lives of the most celebrated heroes in verse, which his pupil learnt by heart. But notwithstanding the faithfulness, wherewith he fulfilled his duty as a guardian, three other brothers of Woo-wang, who possessed large principalities, and envied the ascendancy which Chow-kung had obtained over their nephew, blackened his character so, that this excellent man was obliged to withdraw from court. Shortly afterwards a violent tempest destroyed the harvest, which was almost ripe. The young emperor examined the records of his predecessors, in order to find out what they had done under similar circumstances. The first paper which fell into his hands, stated the devotion of Chow-kung, who had been ready to sacrifice his life for Woo-wang when he was on the point of death. Struck with this extraordinary instance

of attachment, he hastened to the retreat of Chow-kung, and brought him back to the court. The heavens again became serene, and all nature revived. Meanwhile the three uncles of Ching-wang had joined Woo-kang, the son of the tyrant Chow-sin, and risen in open rebellion. The emperor, convinced of the goodness of his cause, appealed to Heaven, and led forth his soldiers to battle. Several of his vassals, plotting with the rebels, had attacked the principality Loo, where a son of Chow-kung reigned; but however numerous were their armies, they were speedily routed, and entirely dispersed. All had to sue for mercy. The emperor, indulging his clemency, only gave orders for the execution of Woo-kang, and bestowed his government upon the brother of Chow-sin. One of the emperor's uncles died; the other was imprisoned for life; one of the rebellious governors was exiled, and another decapitated. With the view of putting an end to faction, the emperor removed all the people, who were still attached to the Shang dynasty, into a distant district, and built for them the city Lo-yang. After having addressed to them some very pithy exhortations, which the Shoo-king has preserved, he dismissed them in peace. Whilst on a hunt, he exacted an oath of fidelity from all the tributary princes; gave them his instructions; in-

stituted several new tribunals; and inculcated the strictest justice and the utmost vigilance, as the means of consolidating the happiness of the state. We ought to praise the solidity of these injunctions, which are the best proof of an enlightened policy. Even our rulers in Europe might study these to great advantage in the Shoo-king.

The fame of so wise and great a prince penetrating to the utmost corners of the earth, there arrived ambassadors from a country to the south of Tunkin, perhaps from Cochin-china; and when the emperor inquired the reason which had brought them thither, they answered, that Heaven having granted them, during the space of three years, favourable weather, without wind, tempest, or unseasonable rain, they were now in search of the cause of all these favours; and as so excellent a prince sat upon the throne of China, they ought to consider him as the man on whose account Heaven had conferred all these blessings. Ching-wang, pleased with this gross and impious flattery, ushered them into the hall of ancestors, and presented them, amongst other things, with five chariots, which contained a box-compass, to show them the route they ought to take in returning to their own country. This statement, though seriously given by the Chinese, is evidently fabu-

lous. Having arrived in the states of Foo-nan and Lin-yih, they embarked, and reached within the space of one year their own country.

After a lapse of some time, the emperor visited Lo-yang, where the inhabitants had entirely changed their opinion in regard to their new master,—all being satisfied at his paternal government, and willingly submitting to it. When he had lost his faithful minister, Chow-kung, he was inconsolable, but very soon found another man, who ably seconded the efforts of his master. It was he who brought metal money into circulation, which, up to the present moment, is in use. Instead of being stamped, it is cast with a square hole in the middle, by means of which a number are strung together; this money bears the name of the emperor, under whose reign it is coined. The Manchoo Tatars add, in their national character, the name of the place where it is coined, or rather cast. Every province may issue money to a certain amount, according to the Peking standard. False coiners are punished with death, yet their number is so very great, that the value of the coin is continually depreciating.

Ching-wang reigned long and happy. When he was near his death, he called his ministers around him, and recommended to their special care his son, Kang-wang, who ascended the

throne of China, in 1078 B. C. His first act of government was the splendid celebration of the late emperor's funeral. The most gorgeous pomp and pageantry were exhibited before the nobles of the empire, in order to show the deep grief and boundless esteem entertained for the departed monarch. Kang-wang's simple dress, however, formed a striking contrast to this empty ostentation. His reign was peaceful and happy. Chaou-wang, his son, who succeeded him, 1052 B. C., gave himself entirely up to hunting; and not only neglected the affairs of the state, but likewise oppressed the nation. The consequences very soon became visible. Some of the tributary princes began to wage war against each other, and Chaou-wang did not interfere. The people south of the Yellow River, displaying symptoms of rebellion, Chaou-wang collected an army, and marched against them, when he was suddenly seized by his passion for hunting. Having indulged in it to excess, and laid waste the country around, he had to cross a bridge, built by the reluctant peasants, who saw their harvest destroyed for his princely pastime. When he was in the midst of it, it broke down, and he and his whole train were drowned, to the great joy of his groaning subjects. Muh-wang, his son, who succeeded him, 1001 B. C., promised at first very fair; but soon relapsed into the

vices of his father. Fond of horsemanship, he made long excursions even as far as to the sources of the Yellow River, where he spent the greater part of his time. The Tatars, of the lesser Bukharia, observing the little attention he paid to the administration of public affairs, grew bold, and passed the frontiers. Muh-wang, pleased at having at length found an opportunity of signaling his valour, marched with a numerous force into the desert; but the Tatars, having wisely retreated, the disappointed emperor found nothing to contend with but wild beasts. This is the first mention made in history of these Tatars, the scourge of China, and of the whole western world.

So inauspicious an expedition cooled the warlike ardour of the emperor, who began to repent, though he was slow to reform. However, to leave behind him some monument of his sincerity, he pronounced, when near his end, a speech, full of wise maxims of government, which he would have done better to have practised during life.*

Kung-wang, who ascended the throne 946 B.C., was already an old man when he began

* The reader, desirous of consulting these ancient specimens of Chinese eloquence, will find them in the Shoo-king, vol. iii., of Gaubil's excellent translation, which considerably improves upon the original.

to reign, but his old age did not secure him against folly. The appearance of three beautiful young ladies having captivated his imagination, he forgot his station as emperor, and when they were removed from his sight by their father, the governor of a city, his peace was gone; he sought them to no purpose; and, in order to give vent to his indignation at having been so sorely disappointed, burned Meih, the birth-place of the ladies, and razed it to the ground. After this cruel, unprecedented act, however, which exhausted his princely fury, he reigned peaceably, doing neither good nor bad.

E-wang, who ascended the throne in 934 B.C., was an indolent prince. Even the satires, which were in the mouths of all people, and sung through the streets, could not rouse him from his indifference. Heaou-wang, his brother, had the same fault. God visited the country by hailstones, but he did not repent. He died in 894 B.C., leaving the empire to E-wang, the son of E-wang (names differently written in Chinese). He inherited all the faults of his father, and suffered the tributary princes, whose number he unhappily increased, to ravage the country. These great lords became more and more daring, scarcely respecting the authority of the emperor himself; and though Le-wang, his son, was by no means deficient in spirit and

determination, yet he did not possess the physical power requisite to carry on so great a work, as the humbling of so many insolent and powerful nobles.

We have already remarked, that Woo-wang introduced, to a great extent, the feudal system. Many of these states rose within a short time to great importance; we mention a few of the more powerful:—Loo, which comprised a part of Shan-tung, the present Yen-choo-foo, the native country of Confucius; Tse, the other half of Shan-tung; Chin, in Honan; Tsoo, in Hoo-kwang; Tsaou, likewise in Shan-tung; Han, in Shense; Yen, in Pih-chih-le; Woo, in Këang-soo; Sung, now Kwei-tih-foo, in Honan; and Tsin, in Shanse, with several others. Many of these princes rendered themselves quite independent and usurped the regal prerogatives: their quarrels were incessant, and their detached governments proved the bane of the empire. It would be endless to recount all their feuds; we shall, therefore, only speak of them when they exercise an influence on the general history of China.

Under the reign of Le-wang the evil increased. This prince was solely engaged in amassing riches. Shwuy-leang-foo, an officer of high rank, remonstrated, by saying: “A prince who takes by force the property of his

subjects ought to be considered as a common robber, and the whole world will forsake him." Le-wang was deaf to these exhortations ; " the only thing I want," thought he, " is money ; fill my treasuries, and I am satisfied." To gratify his thirst for gold, he created Yung-e-kung his treasurer. This man, who understood the art of living upon the sweat of the people, was indefatigable in his oppression, and thus became the favourite of his avaricious master. The cry of the oppressed resounding throughout the empire, at length also reached the ears of the monarch himself. Anxious to discover the malcontents, he inquired their names ; but as Chaou-kung, his minister, refused to betray them, the emperor invited some magicians from the Wei state ; and all those who were pointed out to him by the sorcerers suffered death. The astounded people scarcely dared to whisper ; and Le-wang was filled with delight at having succeeded so well in stifling the voice of the people. Once a-day he met Chaou-kung, and exclaimed : " Have I not well succeeded in stilling the complaints ? who dares now to open his mouth ?"—" This," replied Chaoukung, " is nothing but a veil, which prevents you from knowing the innermost thoughts ; but remember, that it is more perilous to stop the mouths of the people than to arrest the rapids of a tor-

rent. By restraining it, you will only cause it to flow over, and do the more injury. If you wish to prevent all damage, you ought to dig a large bed, which can contain all the water. In the same way, those who are charged with governing the people ought to grant them liberty of speech. That emperor may be said to understand the art of government who permits poets to make whatever verses they please, and to enjoy their harmless pastime; who suffers historians to speak the truth; ministers to give their advice; labourers to talk about their work, and the nation to speak freely. Thus all things will prosper. The tongues of the people are like the mountains and rivers, from whence we dig our riches, and obtain the necessaries of life.”*

We have merely given the substance of this excellent speech, which places the liberty of the press, and, in fact, the true liberty of a country, in its proper light. Le-wang may furnish us with a useful comment upon this saying. He despised the advice of his minister, and continued to treat words and thoughts as criminal. The people, who could no longer bear this inquisitorial tyranny, at length broke into the imperial palace; but the emperor escaped, and disappointed the fury of the populace. Highly

* See Yih-sze, Chap. xxvii.

indignant that the victim of their rage had escaped, they demanded from Chaou-kung the young son of the emperor, who was concealed in his palace. Chaou-kung hesitated; but finding no alternative, he delivered his own son in the prince's stead, and thus, by a peerless magnanimity, saved the life of the child.* The populace tore the child to pieces, and left the palace highly delighted with their exploit. Le-wang fled, and ended his life in an ignominious exile.

During the time of Le-wang's exile, two ministers had governed the empire. As soon as the death of Le-wang was known, his son, Seuen-wang, ascended the throne, 827 B. C., New calamities threatened the empire. The young prince had to encounter the inveterate enemies of the Chinese, the Tatars, who having grown powerful during the long interregnum, attacked the frontiers with great success. He sent against them some valiant generals, who drove the enemy back to their country. Besides, great drought afflicted the land, occasioning much misery. Notwithstanding all these

* Could any reliance be placed on such a relation, which is, probably, altogether fabulous, instead of presenting us with an idea of magnanimity, it would excite our pity for the lamentable prejudice which could stifle in a father the voice of nature, and cause him to preserve the offspring of a tyrant at the expense of his own son's life.

calamities, the tributary princes were continually engaged in mutual wars, and laid the country of their enemies desolate. The Tatars, who though repulsed, were not subdued, again advanced to attack the western frontiers with a new swarm, determined to vanquish or perish. The Chinese general, Tsin-chung, confiding in his numbers, and despising his enemy, tried in vain to rout the Tatars; for the Chinese, wearied with long exertion, soon fled, and were pursued, leaving thousands of their numbers upon the field of battle; and amongst them, the celebrated general Tsin-chung. The news of the defeat caused universal consternation. However, the five sons of the slain general, burning to revenge the death of their father, furiously attacked the Tatars, who had become overweening and negligent. The contest was most sanguinary, but finally the Tatars were driven out of the field, and fell under the arrows and swords of the pursuing Chinese. Not content with this victory, they overran the country of their enemies, burning and slaughtering all before them.

The ancient custom of ploughing the field at the commencement of the spring, which the Chinese emperors generally observe, was entirely neglected by Seuen-wang, who, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of his ministers, refused to undergo such a hardship; yet his

consort, a very spirited woman, reclaimed him from his indolence by a stratagem. The emperor, now aroused, wished to signalize himself by terminating the feuds of his vassals; in which, however, he was only partly successful. A pitched battle, which he again fought against the Tatars, whose sole profession was war, was entirely lost, and he scarcely escaped with his life; but the injury of this defeat was repaired by his faithful subjects, who, bringing another army into the field, repulsed the Tatars. This prince, growing more morose after so many disasters, and wishing to rid himself of a certain courtier, condemned him for a supposed crime; and one of his friends interposing, and showing the injustice of the case, the enraged emperor caused both to be executed. The son of one of them, called Sëe-shoo, fled towards the Tsin state, where new troubles arose and disturbed the peace of the country. When Seuen-wang heard the news, he died of vexation.

Yew-wang was his successor. He was a prince very like his ancestors, indolent, and given up to pleasure. When his wrath was kindled against a rebel subject, and he was upon the point of executing vengeance, the rebel made him a present of his daughter Paou-sze, fair and wicked, like Tan-ke. To gratify this harpy,

he divorced his own wife, and set aside the heir of the crown. Notwithstanding, the highest gratification of her wishes which Paou-sze daily enjoyed, could never render her cheerful; she remained morose. Her husband contrived several means to make her smile, but all to no purpose; finally he made the signal of general alarm, by lighting fires upon the mountains. The tributary princes and officers of government, as was customary, repaired hastily towards the palace to inquire concerning the public calamity. Here they were greeted by the laughter of Paou-sze, who was amused at seeing all the great officers thronging towards the palace to no purpose. The emperor despised the satires circulated to blame his shameful conduct, in neglecting all business and giving himself over to the whims of a worthless woman. The Jung-Tatars again began their incursions, and even took the prince of Tse prisoner; the people groaned under the burden of oppressors, who had grown very numerous; and besides, the heavens showed very inauspicious signs, the earth trembled, and starvation reigned. To crown the whole, Yew-wang marched against the state of Shin, because his eldest, disinherited son, had taken refuge at that court. The prince of Shin, seeing that he was unable to resist the imperial forces, called in the help

of the barbarians. When the emperor saw this, he speedily made the signal for succour; but his vassals did not appear, apprehensive of being again disappointed and held up as an object of ridicule. Despised and forsaken by all, he was slain by the Tatars, and his much-beloved Paou-sze suffered a similar fate.

Ping-wang, the son of the last emperor, ascended the throne by the aid of the prince of Tsin, 770 B. C. From the time of this prince, a period not many years before the institution of the Grecian Olympiads,* the chronology of China is no longer liable to great errors, and the calculation is carried on very regularly. He is the last emperor whom the Shoo-king mentions, the last chapters of which are entirely taken up with the history of the petty princes.

The most pressing business was to get rid of the Tatars, his allies, against whom he had to fight a very bloody battle. The hordes who lived in Turkestan and little Bukharia (the present government of Ele) lusted as much as the Sarmathians and Goths after the fertile plains of their neighbours. Desirous of procuring for

* The true era of the Olympiads commences with the re-institution of the games by Iphitus, 884 B. C., but they were comparatively neglected until the year 776 B. C., when Coræbus obtained the victory.—*Marsh. Can. Chron.* 4to. p. 449.

themselves the luxuries of life without toil, they always found a pretext for invading the territories of their weaker, but richer neighbours. It were useless to describe all the ravages they committed, and the brutal cruelties they exercised towards the defenceless Chinese. To free himself from these unbidden guests, the emperor gave the greater part of the imperial demesne of Chaou to the prince of Tsin, under pretence of bestowing upon him a reward for his great services, but in reality that he might fight his battles against these ferocious savages. Seang-kung, a brave prince, who usurped to himself the imperial prerogative of offering sacrifices to Shang-te, had very soon an opportunity of showing his valour against the barbarians, who had overrun his country. His son, Wan-kung, improved the opportunity of extending his authority ; he had his own historians, and lived in complete independence. Such an example was soon followed by many other of his vassals, who, in the twenty-second year of Ping-wang, openly declared their independence. There were at that time twenty-one independent kingdoms, the names of some of which have been enumerated. Ping-wang tried to establish his authority by alliances of blood, but these cemented friendships lasted only so long as it suited the convenience of the parties. The mise-

ries entailed upon the country by these numerous hordes and masters were very great, but Ping-wang did not live to see the worst of them. He died in 720 B. C. Confucius dates his annals, the Chun-tsew, from its declaration of independence, 722 B. C. The solar eclipses which we find in this work coincide with our calculations.

Hwan-wang, the grandson of Ping-wang, ascended the throne peaceably; the tributary princes being so entirely taken up with their own affairs as not to concern themselves about what shadow of an emperor sat upon the throne. The capital of the empire had been removed to Lo-yang by Ping-wang; and the imperial treasury being greatly exhausted, did not furnish the means to Hwan-wang of following the bent of his mind, which was decidedly warlike. The history of his own unhappy times may be comprised in a few words—One prince waged war against another; the emperor, instead of pacifying these unruly spirits, only stirred up new strife; and the Tatars profited by these divisions. It is, however, unnecessary to describe these quarrels and sanguinary combats. The same remark applies to the reigns of Chang-wang, 696 B. C.; Le-wang, 681 B. C.; Hwuy-wang, 676 B. C.; and Seang-wang, 651 B. C.

When Seang-kung, prince of Tsin,* died (towards the close of Seang-wang's reign), his son was still very young, and Yung, his brother, was about to seize upon the crown, assisted by the powerful state of Tsin.* The queen-dowager, fearing both for her own life and that of her son, repaired to Chaou-mung, the head of Yung's faction, holding her son in her arms. "Have you forgotten," said she, whilst the tears ran down her cheeks, "the orders and prayers of your master? Did he not recommend to you, when at the point of death, his unhappy son, whom you wish to betray into the hands of the barbarian Yung? You promised to serve him as you did his father, Seang-kung, who died with this consoling hope, and now you wish to become his executioner! Let the tears of his mother, let the remembrance of his father, touch your heart! He has loved you, he has covered you with kindness: can you be the most cruel enemy of his son?" Chaou-mung was deeply affected by this speech, and became the protector of the young prince. Amidst the turmoils of war and indiscriminate slaughter, it is delightful to observe that the tears of a woman could

* These are two different states, at enmity with each other. The latter is the one mentioned a little above, in the reign of Ping-wang, and which afterwards became supreme over the whole empire.

exercise so great a power over a hardened heart.

King-wang, who began to rule in 618, was very much beloved on account of his good qualities; but the affection of his people by no means proved an effectual barrier against the encroachments of his vassals. Kwang-wang was not unlike his father; he possessed talents to rule over the whole empire, but without a shadow of power. He came upon the throne in 612, and died in 607. During the reign of Ting-wang, his successor, the vassals grew tired of waging continual wars, and resolved finally to enter into a confederation, in order to punish those refractory rebels who disturbed the public peace. Eleven states embraced this opportunity of pacifying the country. But even this league could not stem the torrent of dissension, and new quarrels and wars arose under the reign of Këen-wang, 583 B. C. Under Ling-wang, his successor, who came to the throne in 571, Confucius, the prince of Chinese philosophers, was born, 552 B. C., in the city Tsow-yih, in the district of Chang-ping-heang, then belonging to the principality of Loo. His father, whose name was Shuh-leang-heih, came originally from the Sung state; his mother, Yen-she, bestowed upon him the name of E-kew (hillock), for the crown of his head was

a little elevated. The period of his birth was more peaceable than the foregoing ages. One of the greatest warriors, the prince of Choo, joined the confederation. It is necessary to give an impartial account of a man who has so greatly influenced the destinies of China in all the succeeding ages. We shall speak of his works which are still extant, and try to view his principles in a true light. Let us trace in all the work of the Most High, and adore his wisdom. The father of Confucius, who had been in high office in the state of Sung, was a descendant from Te-yih, the father of Chow-sin. He died when his son was only three years of age.

Confucius, (in Chinese, Kung-fu-tsze) was the only son of his mother.* She was descended from the illustrious Yeu family, and outlived her husband twenty-one years. Even when a boy, he was very serious, and did not spend his days in idle play. At the age of fifteen, he applied himself successfully to the study of ancient records, which at that time were only to be met engraven upon bamboo.

Desirous of turning his acquired knowledge to some advantage, he made good government the principal object of his solicitude; visited the different princes, and endeavoured to pre-

* His father had several sons by another wife.

vail upon them to establish a wise and peaceful administration in their respective territories. His wisdom and birth recommended him to the patronage of the kings ; he was anxious to apply his theory to practical government, but had to learn by sad experience that his designs were frequently thwarted. After many changes and disappointments, he became prime-minister in his native country, Loo, when fifty-five years of age. By his influence and prudent measures, the state of the kingdom underwent a thorough change within the space of three years. But the king of Tse, envious of the flourishing state of the Loo country, and fearing lest his rival, the king of Loo, might grow too powerful, sent some dancing-girls to the court who captivated the senses of the king of Loo ; and Confucius, after many vain remonstrances upon the danger of introducing these seductive females at court, quitted his situation. After having tried at three different courts to get employment, in order to render the people happy, he finally came to Chin, where he lived in great misery. From thence he returned again to Loo, but not to office. His great fame had attracted for him about three thousand disciples, but only ten were honoured with his intimacy. To them he taught the art of becoming virtuous, to discourse well, to understand the principles of good go-

vernment, and to express elegantly, by writing, the ideas of the mind.

In a vicious age, he became an object of scorn to many, who hated his rigid principles. He was even once in danger of being killed, but betrayed no fear. He was a man of very commanding aspect, tall, and well-proportioned; in his manners very decorous, kind to his inferiors, and temperate in his habits; so that his disciples by his sole look were inspired with reverence. In his leisure hours he composed a part of the four classics; reduced the Yih-king to a system; collected the odes; compiled the Shooking and Chun-tsew, and gave a ceremonial code to his countrymen in the Le-ke. There are, besides, two other works, which treat upon filial piety, ascribed to him, viz. the Heaou-king and the Sëaou-hëo.

When he was sick he did not wish that any body should pray for him, because he had himself prayed. Whilst approaching his end, he deeply deplored the wretched state of his own country. His only regret was that his maxims were rejected; he therefore exclaimed, "I am no longer useful on earth; it is necessary that I should leave it." Having said this, he died in his seventy-third year. His sepulchre was erected on the banks of the Soo river, where some of his disciples repairing to the spot, deplored the loss of their master.

We have had frequent occasion to mention the Shoo-king, which, in our opinion, is the best work of Confucius. It is a collection of old traditions which Confucius put in order, to give them the shape of a history. To teach moral lessons appears to be the great aim of this work. We find long speeches, which neither tradition, nor even records, could have preserved. They are, moreover, so similar in character, that we suspect Confucius to be the author of them all, though he adapted the leading points to the circumstances of the times. Some parts are utterly unintelligible, others are written with a pleasing concinnity, but none *can* be called elegant. This is the only Chinese ~~can~~ work, wherein the doctrine of a Supreme Being is taught. Even the word "heaven" seems, in the acceptation of the ancient Chinese, to have been often synonymous with God; but we will not define their ideas, which they themselves never did. Thus much is certain, that their posterity understand invariably the material heaven, and laugh at the absurd idea of a spiritual being, the God above all. We may consider this work as the source of all Chinese learning. All the institutions of the country, the rudiments of their science, their moral philosophy, wisdom, prudence, political economy, and astronomy, are contained *in nucleo* in this work;

even music finds its place. It is the great textbook upon which all Chinese writers have commented, and forms the invariable rule of governing the nation for all ages.

The Chun-tsew consists of nothing but of dry chronological tables, containing the history of Confucius's native country, the kingdom of Loo, and some of the neighbouring states, which takes up the thread of history where the Shooking drops it. Confucius composed this work principally in order to reform the manners of his degenerate times, but how this could be effected by mere chronological tables we cannot understand. The work is as accurate as any written at so distant a period can be, though the commentators widely differ in explaining the events recorded. It contains the annals of two hundred and forty-one years, under ten kings.

The She-king, or Book of Odes, a collection of popular songs, which Confucius either found in the mouths of his contemporaries or gathered from ancient records, is divided into three parts. As poetry, it possesses no merit, being only valuable for its high antiquity. The odes are various: some addressed to heaven, and sung at the annual sacrifices; others in praise of wise princes and faithful wives. Some are of an amorous character. It abounds in endless re-

petitions. The style is often obscure, and leaves great latitude for interpretation. However, the Chinese ascribe all its defects to its having been mutilated in the new collection made of the work after the general destruction of books by Tsin-che-hwang. The translations which have appeared have given only the sense, and considerably improved upon the original.

The Yih-king, the oldest of all Chinese books, is ascribed to Fuh-he. Several learned men before Confucius engaged in improving the system of symbols, which this book teaches, and Confucius put the finishing hand to it. It is nothing but a symbolical representation of nature and its changes. Fuh-he, who was unacquainted with the use of characters, employed certain lines to express the combination of the existence of all things. We may compare the four images (seang) and the eight figures (kwa), which are deduced from the operating Yang and Yin, male and female principle, to the notes of music, which regulate the harmony of sound. So these symbols are intended to represent the harmony of nature in its various combinations of elements, to the number of sixty-four. By placing and replacing them, they pretend to discover future events, just as chance throws the symbols together. They also use these symbols in order to find out virtuous

motives. From this short notice, it will appear that the Yih-king contains nothing but an imaginary system of things, a system of prognostics without foundation—a cosmology and cosmogony without existence—a system of ethics without principle. The wisest amongst the Chinese have entered this labyrinth, but only to come out of it more bewildered. Confucius, to whom we may ascribe the systematical order in these metaphysical speculations, considered the Yih-king as a work which contained the whole compass of human science. He who understood this book could know all things, and penetrate every mystery in the government of the universe. This practical philosopher became, in this one thing, vain in his imagination, and did great injury to his countrymen by establishing a pantheistic code.

It was the great object of Confucius to regulate the manners of the people. He thought outward decorum the true emblem of excellency of heart; he therefore digested all the various ceremonies into one general code of rites, which was called Le-ke. In this work he did not produce his own ideas, but derived all rites and customs from remote antiquity, and thereby gave to his code an unquestionable authority. Every ritual in all the relations of human life is strictly regulated, so that a true Chinese is a

perfect automaton, put in motion by the regulations of the Le-ke. Some of the rites are most excellent—the duties towards parents, the respect due to a prince or any other superior, the decorum in the behaviour of common life, &c. speak highly in favour of Confucius; but his substituting mere ceremony for simplicity and true politeness is unpardonable. The Le-ke contains many excellent maxims, and inculcates morality; but it has come to us in a mutilated state, with many interpolations.

The above-mentioned works constitute the five books, or Woo-king, which hold the highest rank in the estimation of the Chinese. Confucius's words and actions are recorded by his disciples in a work called the Lun-yu. His just sayings are very much to the purpose, and his hints to his disciples very valuable. It was his wish that they should ultimately become officers of state, therefore he confined his instructions to political economy, to which he reduces all the duties of life. As a man he appears like a common mortal, whose predominant fault seems to have been ambition, a desire to rule over his country, with the benevolent wish of rendering the people happy, by making them virtuous. His outward decorum is highly extolled; even the most trivial things are held up as objects of admiration; but we regret that there is one blot

in his character. He was married in his nineteenth year, and his wife presented him with a son, who afterwards died; but he divorced his wife. We regret to say that he treats women, and the duties of husbands towards their wives, very slightly. By not giving a proper rank in society to females, by denying to them the privileges which are their due, as sisters, mothers, wives, and daughters, the more sensible and devoted part of our kind, he has marred the harmony of social life, and put a barrier against the improvement of society. The regeneration of China will, in fact, never take place, unless the females be raised from the degraded state which Confucius assigned to them.

The Ta-hëo (great doctrine or science) of Confucius is full of sound principles. He begins at home—first rule yourself, and then you can rule a family, and after this a country; his ideas of reform are the same; it begins at home: first reform yourself, then your family, then your government, and finally, all between the four seas. As a part of this work is lost, some commentators have added the substance of its former contents. This is also the case with the Chung-yung, *the due medium*, a work full of high-flown sentences in praise of the “superior man,” who constantly observes the due medium, and never deviates. He even goes so far as to

deify him, and to tell us, that all things are possible for the superior man. However, many of these extravagant ideas ought to be ascribed to his disciples, and not to him. The above-mentioned works constitute (with the volumes of which Mang-tsze, or Mencius is the author,) the four classical books, and are put in the hands of children, as soon as they enter school, that they may learn to repeat them. It is rather extraordinary that political economy constitutes the first science, which all Chinese boys are taught. His Heaou-king, or classic, which treats of filial piety, is perhaps the most useful, though the smallest of all; filial piety is there exalted to the rank of a celestial virtue, which influences Heaven and beautifies the earth. He constitutes it the basis of good government, the life-giving principle of every virtue, the foundation of all happiness. We by no means join in all the extravagant praises, which a Chinese sage bestows upon a virtue implanted in the human breast by God; though we are fully convinced, that the repeated inculcation of this great duty has materially contributed towards maintaining that good order in China, which is truly admirable. Without acting on this fundamental principle, China could never have existed so long. But their filial piety is carried to extremes, and used as a

fetter to shackle the mind, though much of the theory can never be reduced to practice, though some of the precepts enjoin idolatry, and some are quite useless and injurious, it is nevertheless the best system, by which man ever contrived to establish the happiness of his fellow-creatures.

We wonder, that a philosopher who enjoins implicit obedience towards superiors, should have forgotten to speak of our duties towards the Supreme Being, the giver of all good and perfect gifts, the author of our existence, the fountain of all virtue, to whom our eternal praises are due.

Confucius, with all other Chinese philosophers, commands to worship the national gods, whatever they may be. He defines the rites of their worship, refuses to speak any thing in explanation, but merely enjoins to worship the gods as gods. They are in his estimation, what the empty name of providence is in the philosophical systems of Deists,—a power divested of omnipotence and omniscience. Tëen and Shang-te—Heaven and the Supreme Emperor ought to be invoked, an appeal to them on solemn occasions is necessary; but the government of the world originates in the operation of Yang and Yin, the male and female principles, light and darkness.

With the exception of the Yih-king, the doctrines of Confucius have all a practical tendency, there is scarcely any thing but common sense: no speculation, no search after knowledge not of immediate practical usefulness. The mind of Confucius is not, however, greatly refined; he courts honour and emolument, but all with the best intention—that of doing good. His knowledge of human nature is very limited; he considers man as naturally virtuous,—“To make a whole nation virtuous is as easy as to turn the finger in the palm of the hand; you have only to show a good example, and all the world will follow it.” How far this coincided with his own experience, we cannot say, for amongst all his disciples, he had “only one, who was truly virtuous; and he died early.” Notwithstanding his good example, the world remained in a depraved state, and not one kingdom was thoroughly reclaimed from vice. The sage himself was liable to moral defects, and nevertheless, views the original bent of the mind as decidedly virtuous.

We may find the test of his system in its having kept so many millions for so many centuries together. No human institution has stood so long, has found so many admirers and followers. If we have to regulate our opinion upon this subject according to the influence ex-

exercised upon the Chinese nation, it will be favourable. We only lament, that a people, not yielding to any other in Asia the palm of superiority, has become formal, and a mere slave to antiquated custom. Improvement has for many centuries ceased ; the Chinese have ceased to think, and become gross in their appetite ; sincerity is extinct in their breast, their heart is hardened against all religious impressions, they are a nation who maintain the form of virtue, but hate to practise it. But we will not ascribe these bad effects to Confucius.

A contemporary of Confucius, Laou-keun, or Laou-tsze, filled up the vacancy, which he had left, by administering freely to the religious wants of the people. We do not repeat the absurd fables which are told of his miraculous birth, after having been borne for eighty years in the womb of his mother. There are many excellent points in his doctrine. To refine human nature, to lead it to the utmost perfection, was the great object of his teaching. Yet we regret, that he is too abstruse. His love of this mortal life was so great, that he endeavoured to find out the liquor which confers immortality. He wished to be rich, and therefore dabbled in alchymy. To be virtuous to perfection, he withdrew from all intercourse with mankind, and buried himself in the re-

cesses of mountains. Though he darkly hints at the existence of a Supreme Being, (some have even found allusions to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity,) we must confess, after having minutely examined his principal, and perhaps his only work—the Taou-tih-king, that his ideas are very confused. His moral doctrines want the strength of principle, his theology inculcates idolatry. His followers have improved upon this system, and filled the air, earth, and water with spirits and demons.

We must now again take up the thread of history, but in order to avoid all unnecessary repetitions, we will give from the “*Histoire Generale*” a short view of the tributary states, to the end of the Chow dynasty.

The state of Han, of which the capital was Hang-ching-kean, in Shense, was ruled by a line of kings, who traced their descent from the founders of the Chow dynasty. This kingdom existed 195 years, from 424—230 B. C., when it was destroyed by Tsin-she-hwang.

The state Chaou, was situated in Pih-chih-le province; it was founded by Tsaou-foo, who lived during the reign of Muh-wang; it lasted from 408—222 B. C., and was destroyed by Tsin.

Tsin, in Shanse province, existed as early as 1115, and lasted till 375 B. C.; it was one of the most powerful and unruly of all the states.

Loo, in Shan-tung, dates its existence from 1122, and lasted till 250 B. C., when it was conquered by Kaou-lee-wang, prince of Tsoo.

Tse ruled over one half of Shan-tung; it lasted 744 years, from 1122—379 B. C. It was succeeded by the family of Teen-tse, which maintained itself till 221 B. C.

Wei, which held its court at Kae-fung-foo, in Honan, was a very powerful state, and lasted longer than any other, viz. from 1115—209 B. C.

Tsae, also situated in Honan, lasted from 1122—447 B. C., and was destroyed by Hwuy-wang, king of Tsoo.

Chin, situated in the province of Honan, in the northern parts, lasted 645 years, from 1122—478 B. C.

Yen, in Pih-chih-le, was long a powerful state, and lasted from 1122—222 B. C.

Tsin, in Shense, (to be distinguished from the Tsin in Shanse,) continued as a distinct principedom 878 years, from 1122—255 B. C. Its monarch then took the imperial title, and shortly after established the dynasty of Tsin, on the ruins of that of Chow.

Tsoo, situated in Hoo-le-wang, lasted from 1122 to 223.

Ke, occupying the district of Kae-fung-foo, in Honan, existed from 1122 to 445.

Ching was also situated in Honan province, and lasted from 806—375 B. c.

Sung was likewise a small state in Honan, and lasted from 1113—286 B. c.

Tsaou occupied a part of Shan-tung; it began 1122, and ended in 487 B. c.

We pass in silence the states Woo, Heu, Tang, Hue, and several others, because they were only ephemeral.

It was the earnest desire of Confucius to unite all the princes. He considered this an easy task; the only thing required was a virtuous head, and all the empire would readily submit to this man. In this he was disappointed. The different kings waged war during his life-time, as well as after his death, even whilst many princes had adopted his doctrines. The affairs of China deteriorated. During the reigns of King-wang, 544 B. c.; King-wang, 519 B. c.; Yuen-wang, 475 B. c.; Ching-ting-wang, 468 B. c.; Kaou-wang, 440 B. c., and Wei-lee-wang, 425 B. c., there was nothing but wars and bloodshed, which shook the empire to pieces. In the 23rd year of Wei-lee-wang, the brazen vases, made by Yu, upon which the different provinces of the empire were engraved, shook violently, which was a sure sign of the ruin of Chow. The powerful vassals, who viewed it in this

light, fought now no more for independence, but considered the imperial dignity a lawful prize to every one, who might venture to seize upon it. During these boisterous times, the chroniclers became careless, and we discover a great many anachronisms in the annals.

Gang-wang, who afterwards came to the throne, 401 B. C., saw the rapid approach of inevitable ruin, which threatened his family. A mountain had fallen into the Yellow River, and arrested its course. The water in consequence overflowed the whole country, and laid it waste.

Under Lee-wang, his successor, the prince of Han took possession of the Ching principality. Under his reign, the celebrated Mang-tsze was born. We have refrained from dwelling upon the darkest times of Chinese history, but are desirous of giving some outlines of the life of a man, who in the estimation of the Chinese, ranks next to Confucius.

Mang-tsze was descended from a noble family; his father died when he was yet very young; he was left to the care of his excellent mother, who by no means neglected the education of her son. She possessed all the moral qualifications requisite to form the heart of her only son. They lived in Shang-tung, in Yen-choo-foo district. Their neighbour was a butcher. Mang-tsee resorted to the slaughter-house,

whenever he heard the cries of the animals which were to be killed, and delighted in beholding their agonies. When his mother observed this, she removed to another dwelling, near a burial place. Mang-tsee, who saw the people constantly crowding thither, in order to weep and to pay homage to their deceased relations, began to mimick them, which also alarmed his mother, who, fearing that her son might become profane, and despise these sacred rites, took up her abode near a public institution. Here his character received very soon that polish, which marks the gentleman. Encouraged by his mother, he made a rapid progress in learning, and having become a disciple of Confucius's grandson, Tsze-sze, he very soon acquired great celebrity. As soon as he had obtained sufficient knowledge of the five classics and the world, he stood forth as a champion of the Confucian doctrines. He visited the warlike princes, and exhorted them to peace and concord. Considering self-interest as the root of all evil, he recommended virtue as the sole object of all our pursuits. "Wage no war," he said, "provide for the aged, be careful in the choice of ministers, supply the people's wants by a proper administration, and the whole empire will submit to you." Two sects had spread widely, the one inculcated universal love, the

other taught selfishness. Mang-tsze thought it his duty to counteract their pernicious doctrines, which in his opinion proved destructive to the sacred ties of relationship. If we except the Scots, no nation is so closely united by the ties of clanship, which they designate by the word *sing*, as the Chinese. All the many millions are divided into rather more than 400 *sing*; those who belong to the same *sing*, consider each other as relations, descended from the same ancestor, and bound in duty to lend mutual help. This excellent custom degenerates frequently into that exclusive partiality, which is so repugnant to the spirit of true philanthropy. One *sing* is opposed to the other, one clan oppresses the other; they proceed even so far as to engage in open hostilities. The ties of nearer relationship are still closer. A Chinese is taught by his sages to love his relations, and to promote their interests, even to the neglect of his duty towards his neighbour. Mang-tsze, who was afraid, that a system of general philanthropy would do away with the innate love towards our kindred, was particularly anxious to circumscribe the bounds of the affections.

He boldly addressed the princes, upbraided them with their faults, pointed out the way of governing the nation well, and held up the glorious examples of Yaou, Shun, and Woo-wang

for imitation. However, he was slighted, and though he often held office, he could never remain so long in it as to give a practical proof of the efficacy of his theory. Disclaiming all merit of originality, he spoke of himself as the humble disciple of Confucius, who only repeated what had been said before him. He is more diffuse than his master, but also more explicit. His ideas of the goodness of human nature are so strong, that he continually dwells upon this subject. The bent of the human mind towards virtue is as strong as the law of gravitation; it only requires a good example, and all the world will instantly become virtuous. But, notwithstanding these utopian opinions, he had to make the sad experience, that his exhortations were slighted in many instances, and the utmost depravity reigned uncontrolled throughout the country. Whilst alive, he was generally overlooked, but after his death, which happened at the advanced age of 84 years, he was raised to the rank of a saint, and almost deified. His works, which contain his sayings, form a part of the four classics, and are in high renown for beauty of diction and strength of sentiment. Kaou-tsoo, the founder of the Ming dynasty, was highly offended at the liberty which he takes in upbraiding tyrants; he prohibited the study of his works. One of the literati joined

in the general clamour against this unjust restriction, and addressed a memorial to the emperor upon the subject, expressing his willingness to die, if the emperor chose to disapprove of this freedom. Kaou-tsoo, touched with such an enthusiastic patriotism, not only forgave the offence, but also revoked the prohibition.

We hasten to resume the thread of our history. Heen-wang ascended the throne, in 368 B. C. He had the mere title of sovereign, and if the vassals had not been constantly engaged in mutual wars, he might even have lost this. As long, however, as he possessed the brazen vases of the great Yu, the dignity of emperor remained invested in his house; but being apprehensive, that some one might ere long rob him of them by force, he threw them into a deep lake.

Chin-tsing-wang (320 B. C.) saw with regret the growing power of Tsin, which rendered other states tributary; but there was no remedy; for having inherited the indolence of his predecessors, how could he then have resisted the torrent, which sapped the foundation of the throne?

Whilst Nan-wang, the son of the former emperor, who succeeded his father, in 314 B. C., looked about for help against the overpowering influence of Tsin, he saw himself forsaken by

almost all the princes. Chaou-sëang, king of Tsin, an able warrior, had sacrificed to Shangte, and thereby virtually declared to all the empire that he was about to claim the imperial crown for himself. The prince of Tse only disputed with him the palm of victory, but he was speedily subdued. The emperor now invoked the help of the other princes, who, however, could scarcely save themselves from oppression. As soon as the prince of Tsin was informed of the emperor's intention, he invaded the imperial territory. Nothing then remained for Nang-wang but to sue as a suppliant for an ignominious peace; offering his cities and soldiers to the conqueror, and engaging to pay tribute. Chaou-sëang accepted the offer, and sent him back to his country, where he died unregretted and unknown, leaving no heirs to dispute with Tsin the possession of the throne. Chaou-sëan immediately took possession of the imperial domains, but the Chow people, detesting those of Tsin, fled from their country, and ranged themselves around the standard of Chow-keun, who was a descendant of Hwan-kung, a brother of the emperor Kaou-wang, and possessed a small district in Honan. This prince, whom history also calls Hwuy-kung, possessed great courage; but the other princes not seconding his efforts, he was forced to submit to Tsin. Chaou-sëang did not

live to see the fulfilment of his wishes. He had expected, that all the other princes would acknowledge him as their emperor, but had the mortification to observe, that they refused him this homage, till he had forcibly compelled them to render it. Whilst in the eager pursuit of glory, he was called away from this world, and his grandson, Chwang-seang-wang enjoyed that dignity, which his ancestor had so anxiously sought, 249 B. C.

CHAPTER IX.

TSIN DYNASTY.

FROM 249 TO 206 B. C.

THE dominions of Tsin extended over a fifth-part of the whole empire; there was nothing wanting but the imperial dignity to render the prince of Tsin master of China. The moment for obtaining this had arrived, but Chaou-sëang did not enjoy the fruits of his conquests; his son also was called away by death. E-jin, the grandson of Chaou-sëang had been a hostage in the Chaou country, where he narrowly escaped a dreadful fate when his grandfather declared war against Chaou.

Chaou-sëang had, by his cruelty, rendered the name of Tsin odious. When he had overcome the states of Han and Chaou, which were attached to the Chow family, he beheaded many thousand people, with no other view than that of rendering the name of Tsin terrible. His son, Hëaou-wan-wang, died a few days after his accession to the throne. E-jin, whom his-

tory calls Chwang-sëang-wang, succeeded, and prosecuted with ardour the war his grandfather had commenced. He defeated the troops of Han, took from them several villages and cities, routed the prince of Chaou, and forced the prince of Tsoo to flee from his capital. Such continued success made the other states tremble. Five of them entered into an alliance, and marched against Chwang-sëang, who was defeated in a pitched battle, fled, and died shortly afterwards of vexation.

Before E-jin came to the throne, and while he was still in Chaou, he became acquainted with a merchant called Leu-puh-wei. This man had conceived the extravagant idea of raising one of his own children to the throne; with this view he bought a female slave, and after she had conceived by him, made a present of her to E-jin. She bore a son, whom E-jin considered as his own. When Chwang-sëang-wang, his supposed father, died, the boy, who was then thirteen years old, succeeded. Aware of the great talents of Leu-puh-wei, he called him to the court, made him prime-minister, and entrusted, in fact, all state affairs to him. This spurious child was the famous Che-hwang-te. His mother behaved afterwards very ill, and had two children by a pretended eunuch. As Leu-puh-wei had been an abettor of this criminal inter-

course, he, as well as the mother of the emperor, was banished from court; the pretended eunuch, who had raised forces and rebelled, was taken captive and cut to pieces, together with his own children. Leu-puh-wei, fearing that the secret of his villany had been discovered, swallowed poison and died. We cannot vouch for the veracity of this tale, which might perhaps have been invented in order to tarnish the memory of an enemy to learning, which Che-hwang-te proved to be.

The exile of his mother, who lived in the utmost wretchedness, roused the minds of some philosophers to expostulate with the prince upon his impiety and unheard-of cruelty. "Filial piety," they remarked, "is the first of all virtues, against which you wantonly offend." The emperor, highly indignant at their freedom, prohibited, under pain of death, similar remonstrances; and in order to show that he was in earnest, always held a naked sword whenever he gave audience. But notwithstanding this threat, twenty-seven literati, venturing to represent the matter again, were immediately dispatched; and in order to strike terror into the people, their limbs were hung up outside the palace. Yet the veneration in which filial piety is held inspired another intrepid man, called Maou-tsëaou, to venture to upbraid the

emperor. "A man," he said, "who lives as if he were never to die, a prince who governs as if he could never lose his kingdom, will not long enjoy what he possesses ;—the first possesses a life of which he does not know the price, the second an empire which he does not know how to preserve. Be pleased to hear me for one moment." The emperor granted him the request. Maou continued : "You have put to death the pretended father of two children, who being brought forth by your mother, were your brothers. You have most barbarously massacred your nearest kindred, your brethren. You have exiled her to whom you owe your life. Whether or not she has committed those crimes which are imputed to her is not the question ; I only wish to point out to you, that a son whom she has nursed in her lap has no right to treat her according to the rigour of the law. You have butchered the sages who exposed your nefarious actions. Can the heinous crimes of the barbarous and voluptuous Këe, and of the ferocious Chow, be compared with your's ? They lost the empire ; I tremble for you, if you do not hasten to amend your life. This is all I have to tell you, for your own advantage, and I shall die content."

The emperor, struck with the intrepidity of the sage, pardoned his freedom of speech. Af-

ter having expressed his regret that he could no more revive those whom he had cruelly butchered, he went himself, accompanied by Maou, to recal his mother. Maou was retained at court as a faithful adviser.*

This moderation of Che-hwang-te gained him the hearts of the people. It was, however, very difficult for him to disguise the mortification he felt at living under the surveillance of intrepid censors. As his court was filled with officers who had been born in foreign states, he issued an edict, ordering all foreigners who held government appointments to leave Tsin. Amongst them was a man called Le-sze, who regretted to leave a court where he had enjoyed such great honours, and therefore represented to the king of what great use foreigners had been in former times to the kingdom of Tsin. The emperor read the paper, admired the ingenuity of the author, revoked the edict, and made Le-sze his prime-minister. Le-sze possessed all the qualities which fitted him for so high a situation. It was he who concerted with Che-hwang-te the gigantic plan of subjecting the whole empire of China to one sole sovereign. To accomplish this great end, which caused torrents of blood to flow, they first amassed a very great treasure, and then sowed discord amongst the

* Yih-sze. *Memoires sur le Chinois*, vol. iii.

petty princes ; first exciting them to war, by furnishing money and assistance, and then overcoming them one by one. But his cruelty alienated all hearts from him ; and though Che-hwang-te by force of arms subjugated whole kingdoms, he was not able to gain the good will of the people.

Before Che-hwang-te had succeeded to the throne, he had contracted an intimacy with the hereditary prince of Yen, called Tan. When he was seated upon the throne, Tan paid him a visit, but was coldly received, which made him return to his own country with disappointment. On his return, Fan-yu-ke, an imperial general, having fallen into disgrace, had fled to Yen. The emperor set a price upon his head, but Tan refused to violate the laws of hospitality. Though Tan appeared very sincere in his regard towards Fan-yu-ke, he kept him at his court only with the view of revenging the insult he had received. A crafty man, called King-ko, was sent to Fan-yu-ke, in order to acquaint him with the dreadful fate his family had suffered by the Tsin tyrant on his own account. “ You,” he added, “ will very soon fall a victim to the tyrant ; I advise you, therefore, to commit suicide. I shall carry your head to the tyrant, and whilst he is viewing it, I shall bury this poniard in his breast ; thus you will re-

venge your family, and the empire will be freed from slavery."

Fan-yu-ke listened with attention; he was enchanted with the prospect, and cut his throat. King-ko hastened with his head to Che-hwang-te, prostrated himself, and presented it in a box to the emperor. Whilst he was examining it, King-ko drew his poniard, but the emperor perceived it in good time; he started, parried the blow of the assassin, received the wound in his leg, and thus saved his life. King-ko was in despair at having missed so good an opportunity of dispatching the monster, and again darted his dagger at him, which merely grazed the imperial robes. After having, upon examination, found out that the prince of Yen had hired the assassin, he attacked Yen, drove the king out of his capital to Leaou-tung, and not yet satisfied with having inflicted so heavy a punishment, he satiated his revenge to surfeit by exterminating the whole family. Constantly directing his attention to gain the one great object,—universal dominion,—he defeated all the machinations of the minor princes by a steady course of policy; and they were all finally subdued. Che-hwang-te, who had before only borne the name of Ching-wang, as soon as he saw himself the sole master of the whole empire, adopted the title of Emperor. Puffed up by his many

victories, he thought himself by no means inferior to any of the preceding worthies, Shinnung, Yaou, and Shun; he therefore adopted the epithet of Che, "beginning first," which he placed before the title of Emperor. The imperial colour was changed into black, 221 B.C., and a regular system of despotism introduced. But he did not forget the improvement of his country. Astronomy, during the many troubles of the states, had fallen into disuse; he re-established it, and published a calendar. Anxious to obliterate all the memory of sanguinary conquest, he ordered all the arms to be brought to his capital, Hëen-yang, and obliged his numerous soldiers to settle themselves in this city, where he endeavoured to surpass all his predecessors in luxury and magnificence. The palace was tastefully laid out, and enriched with the spoils of many kingdoms; but the ease of the court could not soften the prince. He visited all the provinces of the empire, made his own observations, and even penetrated to the great ocean. With scarcely any train, he traversed valleys and plains, always intent upon his duty. His vigorous mind was restless; he could not brook the reproaches of the literati, nor conform to their advice of introducing the old order of things—he wished to be a founder, not a restorer of an empire. Even in the pre-

valent superstition he dared to introduce innovations, and to offer sacrifices according to his own fancy. Being almost drowned whilst crossing a river, he inquired about the cause; the spirit of a mountain, which was pointed out to him, received all the credit. He therefore had the mountain laid bare of all its trees and herbs, in order to revenge himself for the insult. At another time, he dispatched some young men and women in search of the islands of immortality, which he was told were situated towards the east. The adventurers were driven back from thence by a very heavy gale, and returned without bringing with them the liquor of immortality; but one of their number, who had been driven in a different direction, reported to the emperor that he had landed at the isles of immortality, where he had found a manuscript, which stated that the Tsin empire was to end by Hoo. Che-hwang-te lent a willing ear to this impostor, and immediately resolved to attack the Heung-noo or Huns, for these he understood were the Hoo which would put an end to the reign of his family.

The Huns, this scourge of the civilized world, dated their empire from one of the princes of the Hëa dynasty. Their country was of great extent, situated on the west of Shen-se, of which they possessed the western parts; and their

posterity still inhabit a part of that territory, the present Ele. They belonged to that extensive tribe which the ancients comprised under the name of Scythians. The country they inhabited was so barren as to render agriculture little available to the maintenance of life. Their indolent, pastoral habits had for them greater attractions than the constant toil of the Chinese peasant. Hunting is their chief amusement, and next to their herds, their principal means of subsistence. Without the arts of civilized life, they are cruel and blood-thirsty, desirous of conquest, and insatiable in rapine. Even the eastern provinces of the Grecian colonies were often molested by the savages who dwelt in the plains beyond the Oxus and Jaxartes. The famous valour of the Persian heroes, Rustam and Asfendiar, was signalized in the defence of their country against the Afrasiabs of the North; and the invincible spirit of the same barbarians resisted the victorious arms of Cyrus and Alexander. The Huns were not the least amongst those numerous hordes. Their rulers, named Tanjous, gradually became the conquerors and the sovereigns of a formidable empire. Their victorious arms were only bounded by the Eastern Ocean; the thinly-inhabited territories along the banks of the Amoor acknowledged their sway; they conquered countries near the

Irtish and Imaus; nothing could stop them but the ice-fields of the Arctic seas. Their principal strength was in their innumerable cavalry, which appears to have been very skilful in the use of the bow. Their march was neither checked by mountains nor torrents; they swam over the deepest rivers, and surprised with rapid impetuosity the camps of their enemies. Against such hordes no military tactics, no fortifications, proved of any avail. They carried all before them with irresistible power, and never waited until a numerous army could be assembled to overwhelm them. Hardy to an extreme, they could support fatigue and hunger; and never lost view of the object of all their excursions—plunder.

Che-hwang-te surprised, and sought to extirpate these fierce barbarians, and finding them unprepared, the conquest was very easy. His generals having subdued the people in the South, nothing more remained to be done than to subdue these Tatars, or, at least, to put a stop to their inroads. Some of the Northern states had eventually built a wall, to keep these unbidden guests out of their territories. Che-hwang-te resolved to erect a monument of his enterprising spirit, which should be a lasting memorial of his greatness. This was the building of the great wall, which commences at Lin-tëaou, in the western

part of Shen-se, and terminates in the mountains of Leaou-tung, in the sea, a distance of more than fifteen hundred miles. It runs over hills and rivers, through valleys and plains, and is perhaps the most stupendous work ever produced by human labour. He lined it with fortresses, erected towers and battlements, and built it so broad that six horsemen might ride abreast upon it. To lay the foundation in the sea, several vessels, loaded with ballast, were sunk, and upon this the wall was erected. Every third man in the empire was required to work on it, under the direction of Mung-téen, 240 B. C. The enormous work was finished within five years, but the founder had not the satisfaction of seeing it completed. During these immense pursuits, the emperor was often interrupted in his work by the representations of the literati, who desired to restore ancient customs, and revert to the glorious times of Yaou and Shun. The emperor, fond of innovations, anxious to perpetuate his name by extraordinary works, was highly dissatisfied with their observations. Le-sze, his prime-minister, advised him, therefore, to put a stop to all similar remarks by burning the ancient books. No period in all Chinese history has proved so injurious to literature as this. But though even many millions of volumes might have been burnt, though even

several literati suffered death in defence of these precious treasures, it cannot be believed that all the copies could have been destroyed. However, the confusion which has thereby been introduced into the classics and historical annals, is so great, that the most learned Chinese have never been able to rectify the errors.

Though the emperor had been always intrepid in the midst of a battle, he began to tremble at the approach of death. A stone, which was said to have fallen from heaven, and was shown to him, produced the first symptoms of fear. He was never afterwards happy, but soon died, in the presence of some eunuchs and of Le-sze, 210 B.C. His eldest son, Foo-soo, had remonstrated with his father when 460 literati were buried alive, on account of their refusal to destroy their national literature; he had in consequence fallen into disgrace, and his death was resolved upon; but his father died before the orders were executed. However, he lost the throne, for his brother Hoo-hae was raised to it by Le-sze.

In viewing the character of this prince, who is so much detested by the Chinese, we find much to blame and to abhor; but he possessed great qualifications, which eminently fitted him to be the ruler of a great nation. If China had had many such emperors, it would have been

from the bondage of custom, and have kept pace in improvement with other nations. Che-hwang-te was a conqueror, but he was likewise a politician.

His son, Urh-she-hwang-te, succeeded him. The imperial funeral was celebrated with immense pomp; the corpse was buried at the foot of the Le-shan mountain. The brave general, Mung-tëen, was condemned to drink poison, in order to atone for the intrigues of a parcel of worthless eunuchs.

Che-hwang-te had seen the evil of a feudal government, and had therefore lowered the royal families, notwithstanding the many representations which were made to him to restore things to the ancient order. His son lived only for pleasure, and never quitted the palace. Some worthless eunuchs constituted his counsellors, he himself being a mere cypher. This gave rise to endless complaints; the soldiers revolted, and declared for his brother; and several of the surviving princes set up the standard of sedition in the provinces. A young and spirited man, named Lew-pang, had become the captain of a troop of robbers. In his early youth he was met in the road by a man, who read in his physiognomy the sure indication of future greatness, and who accordingly gave him his only and beautiful daughter in marriage. Whilst

Lew-pang's fame greatly increased, he chastised an imperial governor for not having kept his word, and became the leader of a small army, with which he joined the new king of Tsoo, who was on the point of attacking the emperor. Chang-han, the imperial general, had too much experience to trust longer in the perfidious eunuch, Chaou-kaou, who was the prime minister, and he therefore revolted. The emperor, who had murdered his brother, was not aware of the calamity which was approaching, and ere he could be warned of his ruin, the governor of the capital entered, saying, "The whole empire is in rebellion against you." The emperor replied, "I yield my rank willingly, and do not hesitate to become a petty prince."—"No," replied the governor, "we do not require this from you; you have extinguished so many families, your own ought to undergo the same fate."—"Oh, leave me my life, my wives, and my children, no matter what becomes of me!" exclaimed the emperor."—"It is the order of the prime minister," replied the governor, "that you should die." When the emperor heard this, and saw the executioners approaching, he stabbed himself, and fell at the feet of Yen-yo, 207 B. C.

The treacherous eunuch now called all the nobles together, and proposed to them to sur-

render the seals of office to Tsze-ying, a nephew of the emperor, who he hoped would restore the ancient splendour of the empire; but Tsze-ying repaid this villain by killing him, to the great joy of the oppressed people. He then endeavoured to repel the army of Tsoo, but without success. Prompted by despair, he tied a rope round his neck and approached the conqueror, Lew-pang, riding on a cart. He was kindly received, and Lew-pang granted him his life. Thus ended the Tsin dynasty, 206 B. C., and the empire received better masters, who maintained themselves for a considerable time upon the throne.*

* See "Memoires sur les Chinois," vol. iii.—"Histoire Generale de la Chine," vol. ii.—"Kang-kéen-e-che," vol. iv.—"Yih-sze," vol. xxxvi.—"History of the Huns," in Gibbon's History, vol. iv. — D'Herbelot, "Bibliotheque Orientale," vol. iv.

CHAPTER X.

HAN DYNASTY.

FROM 202 B. C. TO 220 A. D.

THE history now begins to become very intricate ; but we possess excellent guides, and the best historians China ever produced.

Lew-pang, having received from Tsze-ying all the imperial insignia and the seals of the empire, marched boldly to the capital of Tsin-këen-yang, in Shen-se. He gave the city over to plunder, but spared the lives of the inhabitants. One of his friends took possession of all the public documents, whilst Lew-pang was drowned in the pleasures of the palace, from whence he would never have escaped, if his friend Chang-leang had not warned him of the danger. After having assured the people of his good intentions, he marched to meet Heang-yu, one of the principal generals of Tsoo, who was envious of the exploits of his fellow-officer. Heang-yu, after some altercation, entered the city of Këen-yang, butchered the inhabitants

in cold blood, and killed also Tsze-ying, the last scion of the Tsin family. Not satisfied with having murdered the living, and ravaged the city, he dug up the graves of the Tsin princes, burnt their bones, and scattered the ashes into the air. Such outrages and cruelties were not calculated to gain him the love of the people. He divided the spoils of the conquered countries amongst his favourites. Hwae-wang, king of Choo, was proclaimed emperor, 206 B.C., and Lew-pang received for his share that part of the country of which he had already taken possession, the territories of Pa, Choo, and Han-chang. China continued to exhibit from that day the same scene of carnage and war from which it had just emerged in the reign of Che-hwang-te.

During all these troubles, Lew-pang showed much moderation, which gained him all hearts. He had also in his army, Han-sin, who had risen from the ranks, and fought the battles of his nation with admirable skill. In the year 202 B. C., Lew-pang was sole master of the empire, and ascended the imperial throne, adopting the name of Kaou-hwang-te, or Kaou-tsoo, being the founder of the line of Han. The first object of his solicitude, was to restore order, and to repair the injury done to the country during the time of anarchy.

The Huns had, in the meanwhile, regained strength. Under Mete, a wise prince, who understood how to take advantage of every circumstance, they became formidable to China, and retook those parts, which the celebrated general, Mung-teen had conquered. To the great consternation of the emperor, his general, who guarded the frontier, went over to the Tatars, and delivered the fortresses into their hands. The emperor advanced, therefore, with a large army; the enemy seemed to have disappeared, till he had reached Ping-ching, in Shan-se, where he was surrounded by swarms of cavalry, and had to buy an ignominious peace, by the intervention of a beautiful lady, whom he sent as a present to the Tangoo Mete. After this, the Tatars withdrew to their own country with immense booty; but very soon returned. The emperor sent an army against them under Chang-e; this general also revolted, and even the brave Han-sin was an abettor of the conspiracy, and lost his head in consequence. Pang-wei, one of the most celebrated generals, was also suspected, and after having been deprived of rank and honours, was beheaded, and his body thrown upon the high road. One of his officers had been dispatched on a message, from which he returned, when the head of his master hung over the city wall. He went to the head, ad-

dressed it, and delivered the result of his errand, just as if his master had been alive. This proof of fidelity was reported to the emperor; and Lwan-pas, this was the name of the officer, was sentenced to be burnt alive. He received the news without emotion, addressed a speech to the emperor, wherein he pointed out the generous behaviour of Pang-wei, who had repeatedly saved the state from ruin. The emperor, astonished at this magnanimity, granted him his life, and appointed him a censor of the empire.

Another more serious rebellion arose shortly afterwards, in consequence of the emperor's precipitancy in inflicting capital punishments. However, having quelled this insurrection, he pacified the whole country, worshipped at Confucius's tomb, introduced a new code of laws, and showed himself inclined to restore the ancient literature; but was arrested by death in 195 B. C., and his eldest son, Heaou-hwuy-te, or Hwuy-te succeeded him, notwithstanding the intrigues to exclude him from his right—the princess of Tse, who had a son by the emperor, being anxious to place him upon the throne. This irritated the empress Lew-che; as soon as her son had ascended the throne, she degraded the Tse princess, and sent her to pound rice, whilst she gave poison to her son. But her rage was not yet satiated with these humiliations. She

ordered the princess of Tse before her; an executioner gave her a great many blows, till she fainted; then her hair was plucked out by the roots, her hands and feet and ears cut off, and when she still showed symptoms of life, a large draught of poison was administered to her. Her naked and mangled corpse was then thrown into the common sewer. This unparalleled cruelty even shocked the emperor, who refused to commence his reign, for fear of rendering himself an abettor of such a heinous crime. But instead of studying the art of government, he gave himself over to lewd women, and devoted all his hours to pleasure. But he had excellent ministers, and his mother, though a cruel woman, understood very well how to govern. It was owing to her moderation, that the Tatars made no inroads into China. Anxious to maintain her ascendancy over her son, she removed every person from court, who could possibly have inspired his effeminate breast with manly ideas. Ambitious to elevate her own power, she discharged the most influential persons about the court, and put her relations into the highest offices. The enervated emperor did not live long enough to see the consequences of such partiality, but died without issue, 188 B. C. To prevent the crown from falling to any other but the creature of the empress, she substituted the child

of a common peasant as the son of the emperor. Her name, which is Lew-how, is execrated by the Chinese. She usurped the throne for eight years. The child whom she had at first raised to the highest dignities, was afterwards dispatched by her command, in order to avoid discovery. Her ambition carried her astray, to commit the most horrible actions; and she would have died a violent death, if she had not been called away by sickness from the sphere of action, 180 B. C. She is the first woman who reigned over the celestial empire. Her talents were great, and had she possessed a better heart, her name might have been immortal and blessed.

Wan-te, a descendant of Kaou-tsoo, was chosen her successor. The country was at that time in a very backward state. Wan-te endeavoured to introduce economy, to encourage agriculture, and to promote ancient literature. His festivals in honour of the ancient deities were splendid. He imitated the glorious example of antiquity, and thereby gained the hearts of the people. The Huns invaded China repeatedly. Wan-te endeavoured to check their inroads by stationing a great number of Chinese beyond the frontiers, who had to accustom themselves to the same hardy sort of life. Splendid gifts, under the name of presents, but in reality tribute, were sent to these barbarians to satisfy

their cupidity. Wan-te died in 157 B. C., leaving an excellent character behind him. He certainly was one of the Chinese worthies, though his actions were not grand; he only aimed at the welfare of his nation, and was assiduous in the administration of a paternal government. Under his reign, the Chinese invented paper.

His successor, King-te, was a very lenient prince. The children of the petty princes were educated at the capital. At a great festival, the emperor stabbed the son of the prince of Woo. His father, to revenge the death of his son, succeeded in erecting the standard of rebellion, and was joined by five other princes. But notwithstanding their great number, the battle against the imperial forces was lost. During his reign some earthquakes happened, and the locusts devoured great part of the crops. It was a time of general calamity. King-te died soon afterwards, in 141 B. C.

His successor, Woo-tee, Woo-hwang-te, or She-tsung-heaou-woo-hwang-te, ranks very high in the estimation of the Chinese; and he was a prince fully deserving of that high renown, which posterity has conferred upon him.

When he ascended the throne, it was his earnest desire to conform strictly to the ancient model of government. He, therefore, consulted with the most learned scholars how to effect this

great purpope. Tung-chung, one of the most celebrated, gave him his advice. However, they found in the empress a violent opponent. By her intrigues, she prevailed upon the emperor to pronounce sentence upon some followers of the Confucian sect, who accordingly died by their own hand. She was addicted to the creed of the Laou-tsze, and considered the heartless doctrines of the Chinese sage, as the greatest enemy to the mystical system of her beloved master. However, the Chinese literati, who had so long borne contempt and hardships, willingly listened to the invitations of the emperor, and several thousands repaired to the court. But notwithstanding this great number of sages, the country languished under the calamities which the Lord of Hosts inflicted. There was a great inundation of the Yellow River, a long continued drought, and swarms of locusts, which ate up the land. A conflagration, which lasted for five days, consumed a part of the imperial palace. All these circumstances united, spread consternation far and wide.

China, though proud in its power, could not disguise the weakness inherent to absolute despotism. One of the sons of the desert, a Tongoo of the Huns, asked an imperial princess in marriage. These barbarians despised their own women, who were doomed to the most abject

labour, and looked wistfully after the fair daughters of China. Since that period, a band of beautiful maidens has often been devoted to the rude embraces of these barbarians, as a tribute, which at once proved the imbecility and degradation of a haughty government. Princesses themselves have been given up to these savages to prevent their ravages in the country. It is even in our days the policy of the Chinese court to send the imperial princesses to the Mongol princes, in order to keep them in subjection by the ties of consanguinity ; and many a princess has pined her life away in the presence of her savage husband, whilst raw flesh was her meat, and sour milk her drink.

Woo-tee, on this occasion convoked a council, and the majority was in favour of the Tongoo's suit. The emperor, though a very great man, and enthusiastic for the Confucian doctrines, had nevertheless his weak side. Some priests of the Taou sect pretended to have discovered the liquor of immortality, the ambrosia of the immortals. They offered their nostrum to the emperor, but one of his grandees drank it before him. Offended at this temerity, the emperor threatened him with instant death. How can you kill me, asked the nobleman, if I am immortal ? Struck with this well-timed remark, his majesty forgave his offence, and henceforth

abstained from giving credit to these empty fables.

In the meanwhile, the Huns were not idle, and constantly attacked the frontiers of the Chinese empire. Woo-te was not backward to repel their inroads. The Chinese on the frontiers were trained for the service against these swift enemies; some Tatar tribes also joined the imperial standards, and after many reverses, General Wei-sing surprised them, routed the whole horde, and took about 15,000 men prisoners, with the whole camp and baggage. Such a disaster intimidated them for awhile, but they shortly regained sufficient strength to renew the struggle. New incursions threw the whole empire into consternation. But this prince was not daunted. After many campaigns, he finally struck such a decisive blow, that the Huns were so enfeebled, as not to return for many years.

Though Woo-te had studied the classics with great attention, he was by no means freed from superstition, and none of the literati even of the present day, are entirely void of ridiculous prejudices. When a beloved wife of his had died, a priest of the Taou sect promised to let him see an apparition of the object of his affections. He imagined he saw her during the night, but on hastening to embrace her, the spectre vanished. The emperor, desirous of being constantly re-

galed by the sight of the spirit of his beloved, appointed another meeting. The priest could not satisfy the desire, but promised to procure from the belly of an ox a writing, which would highly amuse his votary. The animal was killed, the writing produced, but found to be an imposture, and the deceiver was executed.

The patronage, which the learned found under Woo-te, greatly contributed towards the re-establishment of learning. There flourished many excellent writers, but amongst them, none is so much celebrated as Ize-ma-tseen, the father of Chinese history, another Herodotus. He was born of rich parents. His father possessed a large collection of books, which he studied with the greatest avidity. After having stored up a rich treasure of literature, he travelled for his instruction in the north and south of China. Recalled by the approaching death of his father, he received his last instructions, and composed his history, which procured for him the office of Tae-she, or *great historian*. But he fell into disgrace, and was in consequence mutilated and banished. In his exile, he composed his works, of which the history of China, a dry detail of events, obscured by the brevity of the Shoo kings, is the most celebrated. He begins with Hwang-te, and ends with his own times. His works were first collected and published by Yang-hui,

his grandson. When the emperor saw his unwearied zeal for the advancement of science, he recalled him, and assigned to him a very high office. And well did he deserve such a distinction, for he laid the foundation of the Chinese history, and all future historians have profited by his writings. The state of anarchy into which the empire was thrown by the Taou doctrines, exercised the most pernicious effects upon the minds of the people. It was during this reign, that the system of Laou-keun gained the most credit. The priests had many temples built, and erected numerous idols to attract the attention of the common people. The emperor had repeatedly been imposed upon by their delusions, and was even upon the point of sacrificing his own son, who had been involved in their imposture. But when his innocence was discovered, he persecuted this sect with relentless fury, which met the fullest approbation of the Confucians.

In appointing a successor, he consulted outward form, a resemblance to Yaou, in one of his sons, who was then seven years of age. To prevent the reign of a woman during his minority, he killed the mother of the prince, and heir of the crown, and died shortly afterwards—a cruel act, worthy of a barbarian, who has lost all natural feeling. The custom of giving the

reign of every emperor a particular name, Kwo-haou, commenced under Woo-te. At first their names were often changed, and, therefore, it would cause confusion if we adopted them ; but afterwards it was seldom altered, and the name of the reign served to designate the emperor, who only, after his death, received in the hall of ancestors a perpetual name.

Chaou-te, his son, who ascended the throne in 86 B. C., sunk into indolence and dissipation, and the same tragedies of war and rapine were renewed under his reign. The Kin, Western Tatars, and the Woo-kwan, Eastern Tatars, in Leaou-ting, became very turbulent, and it required all the strength of the imperial army to prevent them from attacking the frontier provinces. After his death, 74 B. C., his uncle assumed the reins of government, but being a worthless and indolent man, he was very soon dethroned, by the unanimous voice of the nobles, and Seuen-te, a young prince, succeeded, 73 B. C. He was very young when he received the crown, but possessed a great share of good sense. To avoid the errors of rashness, so common to youth, he entrusted the care of government to Ho-kwang, his prime minister, a man of good abilities, but a bad heart. It was by the intrigues of his wife, that the empress died in child-birth. His ambitious daughter was afterwards raised

to this illustrious rank. She tried at first to poison the legitimate heir of the crown, but failing in this attempt, and seeing that her family, after the death of Ho-kwang, lost all influence in the court, she determined to dethrone and murder the emperor. Several worthless wretches, who had been degraded, offered their services. They agreed to invite a great party, in which all the officers of government were to be included. In the midst of joviality, the empress was to send an order for the execution of all the guests, whilst some of the officers were to be dispatched in order to assassinate the emperor. All was ready for execution, when the plot was betrayed; the authors committed suicide to save themselves from an ignoble death, and the empress was degraded.

After many fruitless attempts to make themselves masters of the fertile provinces of China; the Huns, and some other Tatar tribes, came to render homage to the emperor; so that, nominally, all the country from Shen-se to the Caspian Sea, acknowledged the Chinese sceptre. Such a glorious unexpected event filled the emperor with the most lively joy. He erected a hall, where the portraits of the generals, who had so bravely fought against the barbarians, were hung up as monuments of their exploits.

In order to facilitate the administration of the

laws, he reduced the code, and explained all difficult cases. The ancient classics, which, with the exception of the E-king, had almost all perished during the general conflagration under Che-hwang-te, had been again compiled from fragments which were occasionally found. Seuen-te caused them to be properly explained, and greatly encouraged the study of them; on which account, he is considered one of the greatest princes of China. Yuen-te, his successor, 48 B. C., showed still more inclination to promote ancient literature. This was the glorious time of the literati to introduce antiquated customs. The most learned amongst them were invested with the highest offices of the empire, and endeavoured to persuade the emperor, a weak-minded man, and humble disciple, to imitate the illustrious Yaou and Shun. Although they continually dwelt upon virtue, they were constantly engaged in petty strifes, and endeavoured to undermine the authority of one another, making use of despicable eunuchs to forward their designs. But these intrigues rendered the eunuchs powerful, and the empire began to feel the consequences of being swayed by such wretched creatures. Continual wars with the Tatars, and a scarcity of grain, rendered the reign of one of the best intentioned princes calamitous. He died in the 16th year of his reign, 32 B. C.

Ching-te, his son, had from his earliest youth studied the classics. He entrusted the government of the empire to his maternal uncles, who very soon engrossed all authority; but in order to obviate the dangerous consequences, which might arise from overweening power, the emperor created an opposition. However, he did not possess the self-command to adopt such measures as might ultimately have restored peace.

He was one day riding in his chariot, when he met one of his wives, called Pan-tsae, and requested her to ascend and sit near him. She replied: "In our old pictures, we observe the most celebrated emperors surrounded by a number of sages. Those of the Hea, Chang, and Chow dynasties, who lost the empire to their respective families, are represented in the midst of women, who were the cause of their leading a voluptuous and effeminate life. I shall thus unwittingly, by mounting the chariot, furnish arms against your good reputation in the ages to come." The emperor praised her for expressing such noble sentiments. He entered the apartments of one of his concubines, and fell in love with a beautiful actress. The empress and Pan-tsae withdrew in consequence from the court. Carried away by a most ardent love towards this woman, the emperor raised her father, Chaou-lin, to high rank, in order to con-

ceal her low birth. One of the grandees represented to the emperor the injustice he did to the nation, by following solely the bent of his passion ; but enraged at such freedom, the emperor sentenced him to pluck out, for two years, the grass which grew upon the tombs of his ancestors. He then raised her to the rank of empress ; but growing very soon tired of her, he selected another celebrated beauty for his concubine, whilst the new empress lived a most licentious life in her retirement. Many uncommon phenomena in nature, such as comets, earthquakes, inundations, &c., disquieted the mind of this vicious prince, who was lost to the world by libertinism. But though weak in the administration of justice, he had cruelty enough to send poison to his former empress, because she had endeavoured to regain his affection and her rank. He died suddenly, in the year 8, B. C. unregretted ; and his successor, Gae-te, a nephew of his, ascended the vacant throne. He was a man of a great mind ; but, notwithstanding his severity against the grandees, he could not put a stop to all the cabals of his court, which had long become a scene of faction. He died in the same year in which our blessed Saviour came on earth. Had he reigned longer, China might have been freed from a number of insolent and oppressive nobles. The grandson of Yuen-te, though only

nine years of age, both by the empress and an ambitious noble, Wang-mang, was proclaimed emperor, under the remarkable name of Ping-te, peaceful emperor,—prince of peace.

The reins of government were now entirely in the hands of Wang-mang, who was unwearied in the pursuit of honours and emoluments. Of his treasures he was liberal, and thus gained the hearts of the people and the literati. To render his administration the more glorious, he raised the descendants of Confucius, of the sixteenth generation, to a very high rank in the empire, which, from that time, has been hereditary. The glory of his government was also greatly heightened in the eyes of the people by an embassy from the South. We are not able to ascertain from what state; but the ambassadors brought, amongst their tribute, a rhinoceros, and tendered their country to the son of Heaven. But nothing gained him so much popularity as his simplicity and affability of manners, joined to a tender care for the welfare of the people, especially in times of scarcity. Aware of the obstacles which the empress might throw in his way, in the prosecution of his projects, he flattered her as a woman, and prevailed upon one of the Han-tan-yoos to send her a princess as a servant. But woe unto him who opposed his measures: if he were of royal extraction, he

was soon to fall a victim to Wang-mang's ambition. When he stood in want of money to follow up his plans, he opened the graves, and robbed the buried riches. Such sacrilege procured him many enemies, which he, however, conciliated by bribes. Having secured a great many partisans, he poisoned the emperor; but, to take away all suspicion, pretended to be ready to sacrifice his life for the recovery of the prince, and accordingly drew up a prayer. Ping-te died shortly afterwards, in the year five of our era. Wang-mang had now realised all his wishes; he was entrusted with the regency of the empire, as guardian to a child of two years old, a descendant of Seuen-te. As soon, however, as he had put down the rebels, who refused to obey the regency, he threw off the mask, and declared himself emperor. To settle himself more firmly upon the throne, he degraded all the descendants of the Han family to the rank of the common people; and gave to his reign the name of *Sin-new*. After having irritated the Tatars by treachery, he had not only to combat these fierce enemies, but also to fight against numerous corps of rebels, who had declared for the Han dynasty. But he was gifted with a great soul, and fully possessed the art of conciliating opposite parties. Greater than the evils inflicted by war, was the drought, and a

very severe frost, which utterly destroyed the whole crop. Fan-chung, one of the great leaders of the Han party, had collected a numerous, undisciplined army, with which he laid waste the whole country. His soldiers had painted their eyebrows red, in order to indicate that they were ready to fight to the last, till the blood flowed from their veins. He introduced a song amongst his soldiers and amongst the people, wherein it was said: "If you adhere to the red eyebrows, you are safe: without incurring danger, you may set Wang-kwang at defiance; but if you desire death, follow his leader." Lew-shung and Lew-sew, two scions of the illustrious family of Han, resolved to revenge the disgrace done to their family. They, therefore, collected an army, encouraged by the prognostication of an astrologer, that Lew-sew was some time to become an emperor, and ultimately proved successful against the imperial forces. Wang-mang was shut up in Chang-nan; the rebels took it by storm; he fled to save himself from death; whilst he exclaimed: "If Heaven grants me courage, what can the Hans do to me?" But in the general confusion, a soldier cut off his head, which was openly exposed to the mob. All insulted the mortal remains of the usurper; some even tore out his tongue, and devoured it. His body was cut to

pieces, and thrown into the street, where the populace trod it under foot. Thus ended an ambitious man, who, with the talents he possessed, might have renovated all China; A. D. 23.

Lew-heuen was now raised to the throne by the soldiers, and received the name of Wae-yang-wang. But the country was now in a state of anarchy, and his whole reign nothing but continual war against the various leaders of factions.

Lew-sew, his successor, who, when upon the throne, adopted the name of Kwang-woo-te; was forced by his soldiers, A. D. 25, to become emperor. His first act was to declare a general amnesty, by which he gained the love of the people, and conciliated the interests of the various parties. But, notwithstanding his pacific disposition, the people were too much accustomed to war and rapine, and too much embittered against each other, to listen to the emperor's injunctions. The most dishonourable war in which he was engaged, was that, carried on against the princesses, who, at the head of a numerous army, had declared Keaou-che, or Cochin-china, free. Since the time of Che-hwang-te, the southern parts of the present Chinese empire, comprised under the general name of Min and Yue, now the provinces of Canton, Fuhkeen, and Kwang-se, had acknow-

ledged the imperial sway. They pushed their conquest farther, and subdued also Cochin-china and Tunkin, which at that time bore the name of Kaou-che. Two spirited women, however lamented the degradation of their country, which groaned under the heavy oppression of some Chinese mandarins: these heroines were two sisters, of royal extraction, Ching-tse and Ching-urk. In order to carry on the war more effectually, they courted the friendship of the adjacent petty states, and gained several battles against the imperial armies; but, when the Chinese general, Ma-yuew, marched against Ching-tse, who was the mother of the hereditary prince, her troops, after an obstinate battle, gave way, and Cochin-china was again reduced to a dependant state.

China gained, under the reign of this excellent emperor, great advantages over the barbarians of the frontiers, by dividing their strength, and reviving the homage of several powerful princes or Tan-yoos. The Huns, who constantly waged war, were gradually much reduced in number; and as they found an equal match in the western tribes of Bukharia, they became more and more harmless. Kwang-woo-te died, after a glorious reign of thirty-two years; having in a masterly manner, maintained the dignity of the empire, under many and great troubles; A. D. 58.

His son, Ming-te, was well versed in the doctrines of the ancient classics. He had an excellent teacher, and possessed a clear understanding. His wife, the empress Ma-che, a daughter of the celebrated general Ma-yuen, was a most excellent woman, and greatly contributed towards rendering illustrious the name of her husband.

In the year 65, he is said to have seen in a dream, a giant. This vision brought to his remembrance a saying of Confucius, "that the Holy One was in the West." Upon the representation of the prince of Choo, his brother, with a deputation of eighteen mandarins was sent to Hindoostan, (Tëen-chuh,) for it was rumoured, that a great teacher had risen in that country. They returned with Ho-shang, a Buddhist priest, who brought with him several of their classics in the Pali language, and presented the emperor with a large picture of Buddha. Thus the superstition which teaches nothing but the most absurd system of idolatry and atheism, entered China, where it has maintained its ground up to the present day. The prince of Choo, anxious to gain partisans, in order, according to a prediction, to ascend the throne, patronized this new doctrine. But instead of rising to so high a dignity, he lost even his fief, and was banished. We are

astonished, that the Chinese, so averse to innovations, should have adopted Buddhism ; and that an emperor, like Ming-te, who established schools and promoted education to a very great extent, should have introduced a religion, which enjoins a state of stupefaction and apathy, as the nearest approach to celestial bliss. Nevertheless all this took place. No farther proof is wanting, that human reason is prone to error ; and that we ought, with the deepest veneration, to receive the oracles of God, the only guides in the path of truth. From this period we may date the general spread of Buddhism over Eastern Asia, which seems to have been hitherto confined to India.

The reign of this emperor was greatly disturbed by the continual wars of the Tatars ; who having been cruelly treated, revenged the injury done to them by spreading devastation along the whole western frontier.

Chang-te, his successor, ascended the throne in 73. His noble-minded mother, Ma-che, resisted the desire of the emperor to confer principalities upon her nearest relations ; but notwithstanding her prudent advice, he followed the counsel of his ministers. His uncles, who received principalities and titles, very soon abused the power granted them ; and again threw the empire into manifold troubles. Under Ho-te,

his son, 89, Tow-hëen, the brother of the empress, repulsed the Tatars with great slaughter, to save himself from disgrace, which he had incurred by his insolent behaviour. He penetrated to the distance of 3000 le into their country, and erected upon a mountain a monument, recording the valour and victory of the Chinese troops. The Tatars bore their ignominy with submission. Tow-hëen, flushed with success, returned to the capital; he received the rank of field marshal of the empire, and behaved like a son of fortune, cruel, and haughty to his inferiors. However, his arrogance led to the most injurious consequences upon his family, who were all degraded from the high rank they had hitherto held, and sent into exile, with the exception of the virtuous Tow-kwo. He introduced the custom, fraught with dangerous results, of raising eunuchs to the highest offices of state. This infraction afterwards caused the ruin of many an emperor.

Under his reign lived a celebrated lady, Panhwuy-pan, sister to the historian Pankoo. She was descended from an ancient, noble family, and excelled in learning, as well as in modesty. Married to one of the literati at the age of fourteen years, she acquitted herself of the duties of a wife and mother so excellently, that she has become a pattern for all succeeding ages. Her

brother Pankoo, was just engaged in the revision of Sze-ma-tseën, and the composition of the history of Han, when she became a widow, and assisted him materially in his labours; when Tow-hëen being disgraced, her brother shared, as a partisan, the same lot, and died of grief in a prison. The emperor to make up, at least, in some degree, for the dishonour done to the family, assigned to Pan-hwuy-pan apartments in the palace. Here she published the joint labour of herself and her brother, a history, which commences with Kaou-tsoo, and ends with Wang-mang, from 206 B. C. to A. D. 23. She became finally the instructress of the empress, and was the leading star of the imperial court. In this capacity she wrote her instructions for females, comprised in seven rules, in which she asserts that the female sex is the lowest of the human species, and that to them belongs the execution of inferior duties. Formerly, when a daughter was born, she was laid on the ground upon rags, where she was for three days forgotten and neglected. On the third day the father presented her to the family, whilst he laid before her some bricks, her only toys. “Think on the degraded state, young ladies, which nature has assigned to you, and fulfil your duties accordingly! But the daughter does not always remain a daughter; when, having reached the

state of maturity, she becomes a wife ; and it is in this state of life that she has to show the most implicit obedience to her lord ; her all belongs to her husband ; she has nothing to claim, nothing to possess ; her husband is her heaven, her all. Her husband possesses the most unbounded liberty ; he may marry during the life of his wife, or after her death, as many wives as he chooses ; but in a woman a second marriage is criminal. She has to obey the relations of her husband with pious reverence, and to serve them in every way. Even when she is repudiated and neglected, she ought to love and to obey her husband." Such are the sentiments of China's greatest daughter upon her own sex ; if she had said, you ought to be the abject slaves of your husbands, she would have comprehended her seven rules in one sentence. But this most unnatural degradation of the fair sex recoils with double force upon their oppressors, who will remain semi-barbarians, so long as they enslave the fairest and most virtuous part of the human species. This celebrated writer died in the 70th year of her age, praised and regretted by all the learned of the empire. She is still considered as one of the best writers that China ever produced.

Chang-te was still a child in the cradle, when he was proclaimed emperor, A. D. 106. The

empress, his mother, established a regency, of which she constituted herself the chief. About this time great calamities afflicted the country: the heavy rains had caused a great inundation, which utterly destroyed the harvest. In a country so populous as China, without any intercourse with foreigners, this is the greatest evil which can happen. The empress ordered the grandees to examine their conduct, in order to discover whether there was any thing which could provoke the wrath of Heaven. She also humbled herself by discarding all the pageantry of her exalted station; set at large the prisoners who were in the dungeons for slight offences, and diminished the punishments of great criminals. Notwithstanding her sincere endeavours to appease the wrath of Heaven, her son died in the same year. Instead of giving herself over to hopeless despair, she acted worthy of a pupil of the great Pan-hwuy-pan, by appointing her nephew, Gan-te, a boy of fourteen years old, emperor, A. D. 107. New calamities poured down upon the empire, and the people began to accuse the royal family of having incurred the displeasure of Heaven. Robbers, and worthless vagabonds, taking advantage of the popular belief, set at defiance the established authority. The Tatars, on the northern and western frontiers, attacked the empire with redoubled force,

so that all China groaned under these multifarious evils. Great hopes had been entertained of the young emperor, who had already reached the 26th year of his age, without being advanced to the throne. But the empress understood his character; he loved pleasure, and lived solely for the gratification of his inordinate desire; and she, therefore, kept the helm of government in her own hand, till four years before his death, which happened A. D. 125. He had at this time seized by force upon the government, and exiled the partisans and relations of his aunt; but his glory only lasted four years. Yen-che, the empress-dowager, desiring by her intrigues to dispossess the lawful heir to the crown, was imprisoned; and Shun-te, at the age of twelve years, declared emperor, A. D. 126. Anxious to form a cabinet of the most renowned men, he was told that a celebrated scholar, Fan-yin, who lived in retirement, deserved the most important office. The philosopher refused the pressing invitations; but when the emperor finally sent him a letter written with his own hand, he yielded. At his first appearance at court, the emperor was highly offended at his rudeness, in not paying due respect to Heaven's son. "Know, you not," he demanded, "that I can kill and grant life; exalt and degrade; enrich and impoverish?" Fan-yin replied, "The

term of my life and death rests with Heaven." The emperor, satisfied with this reply, gave him an appointment; but Fan-yin very soon grew tired of court intrigues, and retired to his former solitude, where he was frequently consulted by his master upon very important points.

The prince of Ting-yuen was married to an imperial princess; but her scandalous behaviour, irritating her husband, he murdered her, and cut her body to pieces; for which crime he was sentenced to death, and suffered the punishment without causing any regret. Shun-te would have done well, and doubtless rendered his people happy, if he had not given himself up to the pernicious counsels of the eunuchs, who, during his reign, became very powerful. It is a sure sign of the decay of a monarchy, when women and eunuchs bear sway. Towards the end of his reign, he had the mortification to see, that a powerful party of malcontents rose in arms. But they were appeased, and brought back to their duty by Chang-ying, the new created governor of Kwan-ling, who removed the cause of their complaints,—the tyranny of the mandarins.

Chang-te, a child, bore unconsciously the imperial name for one month, 145. After his death, the nobles chose Chih-te, an imperial prince, nine years of age. Though so very

young, he showed a spirit of prudence, which was a pledge of his future usefulness. "Of what advantage is it," he said, "that my ancestors encouraged learning, and promoted education, if you do not send your children to school?" Struck with this remark, every person admired the wisdom of the young philosopher; and in less than a month the imperial college was frequented by more than twenty thousand students. Desirous of enjoying the sight of so sudden a change in the habits of the people, he went to the college, where he met with Leang-ke, a brother of the empress. As soon as he saw him, he exclaimed, "Lo, there is the formidable general!" The officer could not forgive this remark; and, prompted by revenge, he poisoned the food of the young prince, who died instantaneously, A. D. 146.

Hwan-te, the creature of the empress, and Leang-ke, ascended the throne in 147. A conspiracy to raise the rightful heir to the throne, had almost disconcerted the vast plans of Leang-ke; but the conspirators were beheaded, and their bodies thrown into the common sewer. Amongst their number was Le-koo, who suffered innocently. Kwo-leang, one of his disciples, went to court in order to petition government to permit him to bury his master. He had taken in one hand a hatchet, in the other the

memorial, to show his readiness to die, if his request were refused. However, he was dismissed without having gained his point. When his friends heard of this, they hastened in great numbers to the place where the remains of their beloved master were deposited, and built a shed, in which they wept and mourned for twelve days; until the empress, touched with compassion, allowed them to bury their master, which they did with great pomp.

The harvest had for several years been very bad; and a drought destroying the crop of 153, more than 100,000 families of the province Kechoo left their homes in search of a better country. The mandarins of this district, in order to justify their behaviour, produced their defence, but were condemned by an imperial envoy, Choo-moo, who put them in prison to await their final doom. Many of the mandarins, despairing of life, committed suicide; others suffered by the hands of the executioner. Amongst them was the father of an eunuch, who obtained leave to bury his parent. His funeral was very sumptuous, and much treasures were interred with the body. Choo-moo, indignant at this useless waste of riches, opened the grave, and procured from the jewels which it contained, food for the people. He was, in consequence of

this sacrilege, arrested by the mandarins, and sent to the capital to receive punishment; but when the people heard this, they went in a large body to the court, and represented the virtues and love of Cho-moo towards the nation, in language so energetic, that the emperor instantly released Choo-moo, and appointed him to a very high office in the state.

The Eastern Tatars, the Seën-pe and Woo-hwan, had frequently waged war against the empire, with the design of possessing themselves of Leaon-tung. Anxious to avoid repetition, we have not dwelt upon these constant wars which, in fact, were mere incursions, at one time repelled, and, after a short space of time, renewed. Amidst the general and continual turmoil of martial exploits, we finally lose sight of the undaunted and savage Huns; some of their tribes having acknowledged the supremacy of China, committed only occasional depredations; while others were fighting against their neighbours, and therefore wanted leisure to turn their arms against China. Undaunted by their many reverses, they finally resolved to turn their whole strength towards the west; they therefore directed their march towards the Wolga and Oxus, and settled in the steppes, east of the Caspian sea, where they were frequently involved in

hostilities with Persia. But growing at length more civilized, they became acquainted with the comforts of a settled life.

A second division of their hordes directed their march towards the north-west, and crossed the Imaus. Inured to the dreadful cold of Siberia, they lost nothing of their natural ferocity ; but, unable to withstand the reiterated attacks of the Seën-pe, their implacable enemies, and of other tribes, they emigrated farther to the west. But the country had already been taken possession of by the Alani, a tribe equally fierce and brave with the Huns ; but whose love of freedom was still greater, since they did not suffer slavery amongst them. Being descended from the Germanic and Sarmatian tribes, war was their principal occupation. A naked scimeter stuck in the ground was the sole object of their worship ; the scalps of their enemies formed, like couree shells, the costly trappings of their horses ; they treated with contempt the warrior, who patiently awaited a natural lingering death. Unwearied in war, and considering all nations as their enemies, they had spread terror and desolation over all the regions of the Caspian sea, but encountered on the Tanais, their masters, the Huns. Their king was slain, their nation dispersed, and the remainder of this once large nation, found an asylum in the inaccessible mountains of the

Caucasus. The torrent of these immense swarms of barbarians, increased by the fugitive Alani, rushed further towards the west with irresistible force. There the Huns met the well disciplined Ostrogoths, who shuddered at their approach, A.D. 373. These semi-barbarians viewed the Huns as the offspring of witches and demons, who had just emerged from the boundless deserts of Asia, in order to inundate and destroy the world.

Leang-ke, in order to establish himself in the emperor's favour, was very anxious to adopt a young lady for his daughter, whom the emperor had married and honoured with the title of queen. Her mother obstinately refused the offer, and greatly irritated Leang-ke. Prompted by ungovernable rage, he attempted to assassinate the mother, but was prevented by the interposition of the emperor. Leang-ke, perceiving that his fall was unavoidable, now committed suicide, to save himself from disgrace; and his property, amounting to the sum of five million taëls, was divided amongst the poor, who all rejoiced at the fall of this minion. If the monarch had acted with equal decision in his future career, many evils might have been avoided; but he was weak enough to entrust the administration of justice to eunuchs, who greatly abused the confidence reposed in them. Happy was it for the empire, that excellent ge-

nerals defended the frontiers against the barbarians, otherwise China might have been conquered.

Ling-te, a boy of twelve years, succeeded to the throne, 168. It seems to have been customary to seat boys upon the throne, in order to establish, during their minority, a regency, which might usurp power and oppress the people. His relation, the empress dowager, though an excellent woman, was very weak-minded. Cajoled by the flattery of the eunuchs, she entrusted them with the reins of government, at the same time, that the friends of the people and the literati were persecuted and thrown out of office. The sudden death of the empress was ascribed to these eunuchs, in a placard, which was stuck up at the palace. Highly offended with this aspersion, the ministers endeavoured to discover the author; but being disappointed in their researches, they appointed an officer to patrol round the palace, and institute constant inquiries, instead of which, they arrested a thousand literati, who were all condemned to death, and executed. Not satisfied with having murdered so many, they punished with death, every attempt to undermine their authority. In 184, the plague raged in the country. A disciple of Laou-keun, pretended to have discovered a remedy, and his cures attracting great notice, many thousand disciples followed him. When

Chang-keo, saw his popularity increase, he aimed at the crown; but his plot being discovered, he was condemned to be executed, with a large number of conspirators. However, before he could be apprehended, he had already collected a large army, which wore as a badge yellow caps. They committed great ravages wherever they went, but were very soon checked in their victorious career, by the imperial troops; which, after several engagements, entirely defeated and dispersed them.

The emperor died in 189: his memory is stigmatized with infamy: he was in fact no emperor, but a slave to the eunuchs.

Scarcely had he closed his eyes when a dreadful conspiracy broke out against his effeminate ministers. Ho-tsin, had given orders to the army to collect in the capital, and vowed terrible vengeance upon the eunuchs. As soon as the empress was apprized of the approach of the soldiers, she dismissed all the eunuchs from their offices, and ordered them to leave the capital. After disgrace, Ho-tsin was invited to the palace; but, scarcely had he entered, when the gates were shut. Chang-yang upbraiding him with his ingratitude towards his benefactors, the eunuchs, who had raised him from a butcher to be a great general, Ho-tsin was about to reply, when he was instantly dispatched, and

his head cut off. His friend, Yuen-chaou, waited patiently without, but seeing that Hotsin did not appear, he requested, in a loud voice, that he might hasten his return, the grandees being about to hold a consultation. The eunuchs, instead of giving an answer, threw his head out of the window. Astonished at this sight, Yuen-chaou grew furious: "Vermins," he exclaimed, "you have dared to lay your hands on a grandee of the first rank. Come with me, my friends, and revenge your master with fire and sword." In an instant, they made good their threat. After having set fire to the gates of the palace, they rushed in and massacred every person, without distinction, suffering none to escape; even beardless youth shared in the same destruction. More than two thousand individuals fell by the hands of the furious avengers. Tung-cho, one of the principal generals, arriving very soon after the massacre, discarded the partisans of the heir to the crown, and substituted in his stead Lew-hae. The empress, with her son, whom she tenderly loved, was confined in a remote part of the palace. Peën-te, the unhappy young prince, during his confinement, made some verses, describing his lot; this roused the suspicion of the tyrant, Tung-cho, who sent him a cup of poisoned wine. He dispatched Le-yu, a worthless wretch,

with the cup : Peën-te wept at the sight of this potion, but Le-yu, laughing at his tears, said in mockery, " Drink, this is excellent wine, I have chosen it."—" If it is so excellent," replied the empress, " why do you not drink first." Upon these words, Le-yu ordered the soldiers to advance. The empress on being presented with the cup, almost fainted ; she threw her arms round the neck of her son, and wept bitterly ; but their tears, which would have melted a stone, had no effect on the steeled heart of Le-yu. Turning to him, she said : " Blood-thirsty tiger, will you complete your crimes by laying your sacrilegious hands on your master and the empress ? Righteous Heaven will avenge our cause. Your villanies have reached their full height, your infamous race shall not escape the punishment you deserve." Hearing this, Le-yu became quite furious, and threw the empress out of the window. Her waiting maids and son attacked the monster ; but at that critical moment the soldiers entering, forced the prince to drink the potion, when he instantly expired.

Heën-te, who was nominally raised to the throne in 190, possessed neither power nor influence. Tung-cho ruled with cruel despotism over the greater part of the empire. He at first plundered the capital, Lo-yang, burnt the pa-

lace, and almost the whole city, and afterwards committed sacrilege upon the imperial tombs. Loaded with the spoil and curses of the nation, he hastened with the young emperor towards Chang-gon. Every governor began to levy troops, and the whole empire was in a state of fermentation. But they did not unite their strength against the common enemy, so that Tung-cho found sufficient time to fortify himself near Thang-gan, where he built immense granaries, and established a large harem. Chung-yuen, one of his courtiers, remarked to him that he had seen a black vapour rising; Tung-cho made the next day a great feast, to which he invited all his grandees. Whilst they were sitting at table, the head of Chung-yuen was presented to Tung-cho, who heartily laughed at this horrible spectacle, but none of the guests dared to lift up their eyes. Such unheard of cruelty did not remain very long unrevenged. Two of his most determined enemies, obtaining from the emperor permission to dispatch the monster, cut off his head, threw it over the wall, and exposed his carcase to the rabble. As he had been very fat, the people set fire to it, and it burnt for a considerable time. The rejoicings at the death of this cruel misanthrope were general. The historian, Tsae-yong, was the only individual who wept. He was immediately

imprisoned, and demanded the only favour, of being permitted to finish his history ; but he died the following night in his dungeon. The murderers of Tung-cho suffered very soon for their temerity, for a large army of his partisans attacked Chung-gan, stormed the city, and massacred the perpetrators of the murder. The country after this fell into a state of anarchy, the stronger party swaying the empire, and oppressing it with relentless cruelty. The emperor was a mere cipher, and his whole life a concatenation of misery. To increase the trouble, the yellow caps gained strength, and robbed and plundered with impunity. Many fled from their own country, and sought refuge with the Tatars, whom they were anxious to engage in their national feud. Tsaou-tsaou, a man of great talent and wisdom, had to fight his own and the imperial battles against a faction, which by union might have been formidable. His success, the fruit of his prudent measures, procured him the title of grand general of China. By the advice of his friends, he adopted the title of emperor, but did not long enjoy this honour, for he died shortly afterwards, A. D. 220. His son, Tsaou-pe, was equally respected by the governors. Heën-te, a weak prince, apprehensive that Tsaou-pe might usurp a dignity, which he himself

could not maintain, willingly delivered the seals of the empire to the young hero, who thrice refused to accept them. To establish his authority upon a firmer basis, he prevailed upon the emperor publicly to abdicate the throne. Tsaou-pe offered the imperial sacrifice to Shang-te, and received in imitation of Shun, the two daughters of the ex-emperor in marriage. However, there still remained a scion of the Han family, Lew-peï, who having heard, that the emperor had abdicated the throne, assumed, by the advice of his friends, the imperial dignity, under the name of Chaou-le-hwang-te. With him the Chinese commence the How-han dynasty, which only lasted from 221 to 263, and numbered two emperors. They divide the foregoing line of emperors into Se-han and Tung-han, eastern and western Han, the latter begins with Hwang-woo.

The history of this period is not minutely described. A historical novel, the most popular of all Chinese works, under the name of Tan-kwo—the three kingdoms—gives a true picture of the wars which were waged with unrelenting fury. Though the details are very dry, and intermingled with fiction, the Chinese consider it as a true picture of the manners of this most heroic age. This epoch, afterward, bore the

name of San-kwo—the three states ; because the kingdoms, Han, Wei, and Woo, contended for the imperial crown, and did not acknowledge any one superior to their respective princes.

About this time, three great events took place, which fully deserve our attention.

During the reign of Hwan-te, the first foreigners, from the south-west, from Ta-tsin—Arabia, and Tëen-chuh, arrived by sea in China, bringing tribute, and trading at Canton. This was the commencement of foreign intercourse.

It was during the time of the Han dynasty, that the art of printing from blocks was invented. Thus the advantages of literature became more generally diffused, and no emperor could again destroy all books. This art, however, did not attract the attention of government until about 935, and seems to have been very little cultivated during seven centuries.

During the reign of the Han, the system of choosing the mandarins from the literati, who had passed an examination, and obtained a degree, was first introduced. This is one of the greatest and most important regulations. This extensive empire can only be said to receive

stability in its present constitution, as far as this plan is strictly and impartially followed.

Chaou-lee-te enjoyed only for a few years the dignity of Heaven's son; and even this short time was embittered by feuds. He gave the best instruction to his son, a promising prince, and anticipated his happy reign with all the fondness of a dying parent.

To facilitate the understanding of the history of the San-kwo, we give a short outline.

The How-han, or Shuh, was that state which, being ruled by the posterity of the Han family, conferred upon its prince the imperial dignity. The Chinese historians acknowledge them only as their legitimate emperors. Han comprised only two provinces, Pa and Shuh, and held the court at Ching-tav, in Sze-chuen. After the reign of How-te, this dynasty became extinct, A. D. 265.

The Wei state, as we have already observed, was founded by Tsaou-tsaou. The territory belonging to it, comprised the greater part of northern China; the capital being at Lo-yang, in Honan. After Tsaou-pe, four other princes sat upon the throne; but the whole family was dethroned at the period when the Han dynasty lost the empire.

Woo, comprising the southern states of China,

was founded by the celebrated Sun-këen, who had rendered so great services to the empire by extirpating the Yellow Caps. His son, Ta-te, declared himself emperor, and kept his court at Nanking. The duration of this state was the same with the two former.

As soon as Tsaou-pe had closed his eyes, both the Shuh and Han princes were anxious to take advantage of the confusion which reigned throughout the Wei state; but they very soon learned that Tsaou-ju-y had inherited the heroic spirit of his ancestors. But when he was dead, and a child was chosen as successor, they possessed themselves of several parts of the Wei state. Choo-kwo-ko, general of the Woo forces, had advanced with a large army against Sin-ching, a city of Wei. The commandant kept the besieging army for a considerable time before the city; but finally pretended to capitulate. On the next morning, the besieging general perceived that the breaches were again made up by the houses which the commandant had pulled down, and asked him what he was going to do. The commandant answered: "I am preparing my grave, and wish to bury myself under the ruins of Sin-ching." Offended with this defiance, he attacked the city from all quarters; but was so valiantly received, that

he was forced to raise the siege. In the year 262, a learned, eloquent doctor, of the Taou sect, appeared in the state of Wei, and held his meetings in a bamboo grove, where they formed a circle of seven sages, who freely indulged in wine, whilst they conversed upon the sciences; but their life, passed in indolence and voluptuousness, attracting the notice of government, this club was very soon suppressed. How-te, the emperor, being daily more and more circumscribed in his power, he finally saw no other alternative but throwing himself into the arms of the prince of Wei. His son, Lew-chin, remonstrated against the adoption of this measure: "If we have no resource, and must perish, let us preserve our honour; let us rush upon the enemy with the few faithful troops we have retained; if the Han dynasty is to end, let it end with our lives." How-te despising this heroic resolution, sent the imperial seals to the prince of Wei; which, when Lew-chin heard, he went with his spouse and children into the hall of ancestors, and, after having beheaded them, he took away his own life. Thus ended the celebrated Han dynasty; during which flourished the greatest literary men that China has ever produced. The Han heroes are famous; it is their age of chivalry. Haou-han, a good Han,

signifies, in Chinese, a brave man. It is remarkable, that, during the latter part of their reign, children sat upon the throne, and confusion filled the country; the Han, perfecting what Chow had commenced, completed the formation of the Chinese character; and the *men of Han* is a name in which the Chinese still glory.

MIDDLE AGES.

A. D. 266—1324.

CHAPTER XI.

TSIN DYNASTY. 264 TO 420, A. D.

BOTH the states of Woo and Shuh were enfeebled by continual wars. Wei only remained unshaken. Sze-ma-yen, a prince of Tsin, forced the prince of Wei to abdicate the throne, to which he raised himself, in 265. His first endeavour was to remove all the partisans of the Han and Wei from court; and when he perceived that the tributary princes had lost all courage, he resolved to unite the whole empire under one head. Seven years after his abdication, How-te died an ignominious death. After many a hard-fought battle, the new emperor, Woo-te, proved victorious over Woo; but the prince of Woo, Sun-haou, brought with him 5000 actresses, who corrupted the heart of the emperor, who thence-

forth devoted all his time to pleasure. At the suggestion of his concubines, he formed a large park, where he rode about with his women, in a chariot drawn by rams, whilst the empire groaned under the iron rule of his uncle. Thus he passed the latter years of his reign, and died in 290.

Hwuy-te, his successor, a youth without any talent, was governed by Kea-she, his wife, a cruel, vindictive woman, who had murdered a number of persons with her own hand. She took direful revenge upon Yang-seuen, the prime minister, and uncle to the emperor, who was stabbed and burnt, with all his family, by the imperial guard. After this murder, she starved the empress dowager, whom she hated with all her heart. The heir to the crown was a worthless youth, and Kea-she resolved to ruin him. She, therefore, invited him to the palace, where she made him drunk. He uttered, during the excitement of the moment, treasonable words, which the empress caused to be written down, and shown to the emperor, who called the council together. The family of the prince, though entirely innocent, perished; and the prince himself was dispatched by poison; but this heinous crime, which had been concerted by her enemies, proved her ruin; for she was repudiated, and sent into exile.

The Huns, who remained on the Chinese frontiers, having gradually become more civilized, they even sent their princes to be educated in Chinese learning; their tanyoos frequently entered into alliances with the Chinese, and both nations seemed to be reconciled to each other, when a new and more destructive inroad of the barbarians filled the country with consternation; and in the midst of domestic and foreign troubles, the emperor expired, in 307.

Hwae-te, a wise and intelligent prince, who was now called to the throne, did his utmost to quiet the empire. The king of Han, having grown powerful, proclaimed himself emperor, and threatened to drive the Tsin family from the throne: he, in fact, accomplished his design; his general having taken possession of Lo-yang, the capital, killed the hereditary prince, and took Hwae-te prisoner. The unhappy city had again to undergo pillage and destruction. Hew-tsung, king of Han, who now considered himself emperor, was a cruel and relentless tyrant; frequently, in a sudden fit of rage, killing his best friends, and showing no mercy to those who had offended him. His officers asked him whether he intended to imitate Keē and Chow. Struck with this question, he replied: "I have hitherto been like a drunken man; and, but for your zeal for my welfare, I should

not have been reclaimed. Receive my sincere thanks for your loyalty."

The greater part of the nation, penetrated by compassion, reluctantly saw their sovereign in the hands of a tyrant. Even the Tatars, under Topa-loo-sew, hastened to assist the Tsin family; and, in a bloody engagement, routed the Han troops. When Lew-tsung was informed of this disaster, he instituted a festival, dressed the emperor Hwae-te in black, and made him serve at the table; but this degradation called tears into the eyes of the guests, and alienated the hearts of the people. To fill the cup of his crimes, he killed the emperor Hwae-te; but had the mortification to see that Min-te, another rival of the Tsin family, was chosen to contend with him for the crown, 313. At his accession, the whole government was in the most wretched state; the mandarins had even no robes to appear before him. He exhorted the people to be faithful to the reigning family; but though the greater part of the nation willingly followed his banner, there was no unanimity; and his subjects were often pillaged by large bands of robbers which infested the country. To fill the cup of misery, a troop of the Han horse surprised Chang-gan during the night, burnt down the suburbs, and forced the emperor to flee in all haste; but for this exploit, the Han army was severely punished

by the imperial soldiers, who revenged the disgrace done to their master upon the enemy. But there being no money in the imperial treasury, the officers and soldiers of his army were forced by want to desert their unhappy master; and the emperor, seeing that the whole world had forsaken him, resolved to surrender to Lew-tsung. Seated on a cart, drawn by oxen, with a coffin by his side, he arrived in the camp of the imperial general, Lew-yaou, who received him with the utmost kindness, and burnt his coffin. Lew-tsung sat on his throne, surrounded by imperial splendour; and when the suppliant emperor was brought before him, he ordered him to kneel down, and perform the usual obeisance. This humiliation touched the heart of Kew-yun, who shed streams of tears, and threw himself down upon the ground. The choleric Lew-tsung was highly offended with this show of compassion; he threw Kew-yun into prison, and executed him shortly afterwards. But, repenting of his precipitation, on the same day that Ming-te was degraded to a prince of the second rank, he raised Kew-yun to the third, and had his body interred with all due honour. Sze-ma-juy, who, after the disgrace of Ming-te, was promoted to the rank of governor-general of the empire, wept for three days over the unhappy lot of his master.

At an imperial hunt, Ming-te was ordered to march before Lew-tsung like a common soldier ; and afterwards to serve at the imperial table ; and as one of his people fell upon the neck of the emperor, weeping most bitterly, this loyal subject was immediately dispatched. Such cruelties loudly cried for revenge ; the governors of several districts collected their troops, and vowed to exterminate the monster Lew-tsung, who, as soon as he heard of their approach, assassinated Ming-te, 318 ; and thus believed himself freed from all apprehension.

The governor-general, Sze-ma-juy, was, by the unanimous voice of the people, chosen emperor. He was a kind and affable prince, well versed in ancient literature, and anxious to restore his degraded family. With him begins the Tung-tsin—eastern Tsin dynasty. On his accession, he adopted the name of Yuen-te ; shortly afterwards, Lew-tsung died ; and Lew-tsan, his son, was appointed his successor. The hour of dire vengeance, for all the crimes which the family of Han had committed, had now arrived : Kin-chun, a powerful noble, with a detachment of soldiers, entering the palace, drove them into the street, and massacred the whole, without distinction of age or sex. Then hastening to the tombs of Lew-yuen and Lew-tsung, he severed their heads from their trunks. He then

informed the Tsin family of the deeds he had done, to retaliate upon the Han for the disgrace which they had inflicted upon two emperors; and delivered to them the mortal remains of Hwae-te and Ming-te. But Lew-yaou appeared with a numerous army, to revenge Lew-tsung; Kin-chun, with his whole family, was slaughtered; and the palace, with all the public buildings at Ping-yang, were reduced to ashes. The bodies of the murdered Han family were interred; and ample justice done to their memory. Lew-yaou, at the head of his soldiers, now raged like a tiger; whilst the emperor, of whom so great hopes had been entertained, remained an idle spectator. But he was, finally, attacked in his turn, by one of the creatures of Lew-yaou, who had declared himself independent. The disasters which followed all these measures, brought him to the grave, 322.

Ming-te, the second emperor of the Tung-tsin dynasty, was surrounded by rebels as soon as he had ascended the throne; but he proved finally victorious, and decapitated many of the ring-leaders. The body of Wang-teen, the principal author of all this bloodshed, was taken from the grave, his head cut off, and exposed on the walls of the city. Amongst all the petty princes of China, there was only Le-heung, prince of Ching, who maintained tranquillity in his pos-

sessions. Had Ming-te lived longer, he might have restored peace to the empire ; but he died in 325.

A child of five years, under the name of Ching-te, was in these troublesome times advanced to the throne ; which was again the signal for a general rebellion. However, China might rejoice, for many of the butchers of mankind, men who had grown old and hardened in cruelty, were snatched away by death ; amongst whom was Chih-le, once a partizan of the Han family, afterwards an inveterate enemy of Leu-keaou, and a tyrant to the nation, who had assumed the imperial title, and governed the Chaou principality. His successor, Shih-hoo, erected a magnificent palace, with all the splendour of the East, where more than 10,000 people lived, amongst whom were the most beautiful damsels dressed in sumptuous robes, soothsayers, and astrologers, with a number of nimble bowmen. But the most remarkable corps was a regiment of tall and slender ladies, who, mounted on horseback, with splendid trappings and elegant robes, to set off their fine figure, served him for a body-guard. When he went out, these females played upon instruments, and entertained the guests at his sumptuous table. At the same time the people were starving, the harvest had been bad ; they looked up to their prince for relief, but

found in him a heartless tyrant. Sheh-suy, his son, resolved to kill his father, in order to free the land from such a plague; but the plot was discovered, and She-hoo degraded the unnatural son, who was the heir to the crown, and murdered many innocent persons. A tribe of Tatars had at the same time settled themselves in Leaou-tung, and become tributary to the prince of Chaou, who, proud of his auxiliaries, immediately engaged in war. Ching-te, who, during this stormy period, had ruled his dominions in peace, and never interfered with the belligerent parties, died in 342, and had for his successor Kang-te. Shih-hoo, prompted by a false miracle, marched with a strong army and much baggage towards the imperial territories; but his oppressions for the outfit of his army had been so exorbitant, that the nation was reduced to beggary; he found many of his miserable subjects on his way, hanging on trees, who had committed suicide, in order to escape the lingering death of gnawing hunger. Afraid of a general rebellion, he desisted from his design, and remained here.

Kang-te, who was young, and debilitated by sickness, died in 344; and a babe of two years was raised to the throne, under the name of Muh-te, 345.

In his sixteenth year he discarded his mother,

the regent, and began to rule for himself. His court was threatened with destruction by the daring and enterprizing prince of Yen, who collected a large army, in order to conquer the territories of the emperor. In this emergency, a hord of Tatars offered their services to the emperor, who reluctantly assigned them some territory on the frontiers, and died very soon afterwards, A. D. 362.

Gae-te was an intelligent prince, but he gave himself over to the dreams of the Taou sect, and studied the doctrine of immortality. In order to render the liquor of rejuvenescence more effectual, he was ordered to fast and to live upon this ambrosia; the consequence of which was, that his health was ruined, and the strength of his mind lost. Thus he was obliged to entrust the care of government to the empress, his mother, and died a lingering death in 365. His brother, Te-yih reduced the state of Yen to obedience. Keën-wan died in the year of his accession to the throne, 372. Heaou-woo was fourteen years of age, when he presumed to take the reins of government in his hands, 376. The generals of Tsin, in the meanwhile, extended their conquests, and, after much slaughter, reduced the greater part of the empire, to the obedience of their lawful master. But success rendering the generals overweening, they turned

their weapons against each other, and revolted from the standard of their sovereign, till the Yen family regained strength, and set them at defiance. His army conquered Tuh-keën, one of the Northern Tsin princes, who was on his march to the imperial capital, and had proclaimed himself emperor. After the victory gained over the numerous forces of Tuh-keën, the emperor gave himself up to an indolent life, his councillors being the priests of Buddha, and old women, their votaries. One of his generals addressed his sovereign upon this subject:—"Prince," he said, "the administration of government is now in the hands of petty officers, clerks, children of concubines, priests, old women, and nurses:" and proceeding in this strain, he hoped to open the eyes of the weak prince; but the emperor, when he was informed of the contents of this memorial, did not venture to read it. His end was similar to his life: having in a drunken fit, offended one of his wives, by telling her in jest, that when she should reach the age of 30, he would repudiate her, and substitute a younger wife in her place; the queen became silent, made her husband drunk, and strangled him in bed, 396. His son and successor, Gan-te, took no part in the government, remaining, during all the wars and revolutions which took place, entirely ignorant of the state

of affairs. It was under his reign, that Lew-yu, the founder of the celebrated Tsung dynasty, became known: he was born in Pung-ching, of a very poor family; his mother died at his birth, and his father, being destitute of all means to provide for the new-born babe, was about to let him die, when a charitable woman undertook to nurse him as her own son. The little boy possessed much penetration, and studied literature with great ardour, but was forced, on account of his poverty, to live upon the sale of sandals. Being disgusted with the trade, he lost all his time by playing gambols with other boys; every body supposed, he would prove a worthless man; but he enlisted as a soldier, and performed some extraordinary feats of valour; repulsing a very powerful pirate, and restoring peace to the empire.

Another formidable enemy appeared in the North. Shih-lun, chief of the Gou-gin Tatars, had become so powerful by subjecting other tribes to his sway, that he assumed the title of Khan, and became a scourge to the empire. Lew-yu had entered the service of Kwan-heuen, who had rebelled against Gan-te; but desirous of signalizing himself, he revolted from his ancient master. The emperor had joined Hwan-heuen; but the army of the latter was routed, his fleet destroyed, and he himself killed. He was, on

that account, declared the protector of the empire, and did not bear this title in vain, for he fought bravely, and formed the design of subjugating the whole of China to the imperial sway. The feeble Gan-te, who had irritated Lew-yu, by not recompensing his services well, was strangled in the palace, and Lew-yu declared in favour of Sze-ma-te-yuen, his brother, who ascended the throne in 419, under the name of Kung-te. Not content with having sacrificed the emperor, Lew-yu killed almost the whole imperial branch, in order to procure for himself access to the throne. Having been declared prince of Sung, he saw with displeasure the prudent measures, which the emperor took in the administration of affairs, and therefore resolved to assassinate him. But the villain whom he sent to execute this crime, failed when he stood before the emperor, and prostrated himself to implore pardon. Lew-yu, therefore, retired to his principality, Sung; but being a restless person, he could not be content without the imperial crown. He therefore returned to the capital, the emperor trembled at his approach, and in order to free himself from terror, proposed to abdicate. A high scaffold, erected in the open field, sustained a throne, upon which Kung-te ascended, whilst Lew-yu stood at his side to read the abdication. After this

ceremony he descended, requested Lew-yu to mount upon the vacant throne, and rendered him the homage of a tributary prince. All the mandarins present imitated his example, the doom of the Tsin family was thus sealed.

Under some of the preceding dynasties, war and bloodshed had desolated the country; nor are the darkest times of Chinese history so full of horrible instances of cruelty and cold-blooded murder. China was a scene of rapine and of every crime; scarcely any emperor having either the power or wish to put a stop to anarchy. The hand of the Lord rested heavily upon the country;—a powerful nation became a band of cut-throats, led on by murderers.

CHAPTER XII.

SUNG DYNASTY.

FROM 420 TO 479, A. D.

LEW-YU was far from having subdued the whole empire, the northern parts being entirely in the hands of other princes. The state Wei, founded by the To-pa Tatars, comprising the greater part of the northern regions, was then under the government of Tae-tsung-ming-yuen-te. Ke-fo-che ruled over three tribes of the Seën-pe, who had settled in the Pin-leang district, Shense province, and gave to their territory the name of Se-tsin—Western Tsin; He-leën-po-po held his court at Hea-choo, in the Ortous country, and had taken possession of Se-gan-foo in Shen-se; the king of Yen had his dominion in Yung-pin-foo, Pih-che-le province; Tsew-kew had his court in Kan-choo, Shen-se province; Le-seun reigned over Se-lean, and held his court at Tsew-tsuen.

The new emperor adopted the name of Woo-te—Kaou-tsoo-woo-te, and gave to his reign the

name of Yung-choo. As soon as he had obtained riches and power, he remembered his friends, and liberally recompensed them for their services, not forgetting his old nurse, who had saved his life, when he was an outcast. But he was equally implacable towards his enemies; and the ex-emperor, rousing his suspicion, he fancied, that as long as he lived, his house could not possess the throne in security. Having offered sacrifice to Shang-te, he sent a bottle of poisoned wine to the unhappy prince, who refused to drink it, but was forced thereto by a detachment of soldiers. Lew-yu did not long survive this horrible act; but before his death appointed a regency of four ministers, 422. He was a great prince, gifted with the most splendid talents, whom a wily course of politics often led to the perpetration of horrible crimes.

Shaou-te, whose reign is called King-ping, was still very young when his father died. But this prince was very weak, and whilst the northern princes were engaged in continual war, his whole occupation was hunting. The nobles therefore judged him unworthy of the throne, to which they raised his brother, Wan-te, the name of his reign being Yuen-kea. He had at the commencement to sustain a very hard struggle against the northern princes; Wei having taken possession of Hea, had thereby become

very powerful, so as to bid defiance to the emperor. His general, Tan-taou-tse, had fought very bravely, but having fallen under suspicion, though innocent, he was executed by order of the emperor, to the great joy of the enemies of the empire. Buddhism had now greatly increased, the temples were very numerous, and the priests like swarms of locusts. They had been expelled from the north, and the emperor, to prevent their pernicious influence, prohibited the exercise of this religion. But all those edicts proved ineffectual to stem the torrent of false religion, since there was no true religion to be substituted for it.

Science had been very little cultivated during the continual wars in which the nation was involved; but Wăn-te erected colleges and encouraged scholars; he likewise improved the calendar, and showed himself a patron of all useful learning. The prince of Wei imitated his example, and China began to revive again as a literary nation. The prince of Wei was very anxious to render his people happy; and considering the doctrines of Buddhism as the greatest obstacle to the moral improvement of the nation, he issued orders to burn the Buddhist temples, to banish the priests, and to destroy their books. Many priests suffered death, others were inhumanly treated; but this cruel

persecution did not much redound to the honour of an otherwise enlightened prince.

Domestic feuds disturbed the peace of the prince of Wei, who fell a sacrifice to them; whilst Wan-te, notwithstanding his great prudence, was involved in a quarrel, which cost him his life. He had two sons, by two different wives, Lew-chaou and Lew-seuen. On a certain day he rebuked them for their misbehaviour; and to deprecate the wrath of their father, they had recourse to a Taou priest, who pretended to control spirits; but when the emperor was apprised of their having consulted this magician, he threatened to disinherit Lew-chaou, whom he had appointed his successor. To prevent this disgrace, the unnatural prince forced the gates of the palace, and committed patricide. His brother, however, undertook to punish the monster, routed his army, and seated himself on the throne, under the name of Heaou-woo-te, or Woo-te. Name of his reign, Heaou-keen, 454.

Lew-chaou had thrown himself into a fortress, which was stormed by Chang-she. When Lew-chaou saw no place whither to flee he wanted to plunge into a well; but the imperial general prevented him from drowning himself, and wept over his wretched fate. Lew-chaou perceiving him to be in tears, said:

“Heaven and earth have rejected me, and can you weep over me?” The soldier who killed the emperor had his heart torn out, and was afterwards cut piecemeal, whilst his limbs were thrown upon the common highway. Lew-chaou, with his whole family, was beheaded in front of the imperial army. Their palaces were razed, and their furniture burnt. The punishment of patricide even extended to the officers who had served Lew-chaou. But the Taou priest, who, to heighten his crime, had also stolen the seals of the empire, was burnt alive, and his ashes thrown into the streets to be trodden under foot by the people. Heaou-woo-te ruled well, as long as he had enemies, who misrepresented the least of his actions; but when he was firmly seated upon the throne, and had given repose to his country, which was at that time in a flourishing state, he gave himself up to debaucheries, in consequence of which he died, in 465.

His son and successor, Fe-te (name of the reign King-ho), was so cruel and abandoned, that the Chinese historians are loath to assign him a place in the line of emperors. This ferocious monster murdered every body around him, without distinction; and was accordingly detested and feared. To fill the cup of his wickedness, he built a hall of bamboo, where young persons of both sexes were obliged to run about naked;

and a youth, of great modesty, who refused compliance, was killed on the spot. Once, during his sleep, the emperor dreamt that one of his concubines told him that he should not see the next harvest: he therefore called all the females of the palace together, and pointing out the lady whom he had seen in the dream, she was immediately sentenced to death, and executed. But his slumbers were again disturbed by the same apparition, which now addressed him in a menacing attitude, and said: "Prince you are the greatest of villains; I have stated my complaints before Shang-te; I have accused you of enormous crimes which you have committed." This second dream greatly disturbed his tranquillity; he consulted the Taou priests, requesting them to exorcise the evil spirits which haunted the palace; but whilst he was attentively watching the means the priest used in obedience to his orders, one of the eunuchs struck him to the earth, when he instantly expired.

His successor, Ming-te, 466, seeing himself surrounded by numerous rivals, killed fourteen of his eighteen nephews; and had to wage a long war with Lew-tse-heau, a prince of the imperial blood. But he was not satisfied till he had cut off all the branches of the tree to which he himself owed his existence. In perpetrating cruelties, he was by no means behind his predecessor;

but, at the same time, he was more methodical, and all his actions were marked by wily policy. The prince of Wei was quite of an opposite character; he was meek and obliging; anxious for the welfare of the people, whom he cherished with the greatest tenderness; but his love for the Bonzes was very great; and, in order to show his deepest respect for their institutions, he built a chapel in the palace, and became himself one of their order.

The measure of Ming-te's iniquities was finally full. One of his best officers, Wang-king-yuen, wished to retire from court, not being able to endure all the cruelties which were daily committed. The emperor now began to fear for his safety, and sent the cup with poison to this object of his suspicion; who, at that time, was playing at chess, and emptied it with the greatest indifference. Having dreamt that Lew-se, governor of Yu-chang, was about to revolt, he immediately sent his satellites to execute him. These unprovoked cruelties alienated the hearts of the people, who would have revolted, if he had not died before the tempest began to rage,—472. The name of his reign was Tae-che.

China had also its Neros and Caligulas. Lew-Yu (who bears also the name of Tsang-woo-wang and How-fe-te—the Kang-këen-e-che calls him

Sin-thus) had first to combat a rival, Lew-how-fan, a descendant of the Tsung family, before he could seat himself upon the throne. Some of his loyal subjects deserted to the rebel army, and cut off the head of Lew-how-fan ; but though thus the chief of the faction was killed, his soldiers fought with great valour against the imperial forces, till they were dispersed by the address of the general Seaou-taou-ching. Lew-yu, however, was unworthy of the throne ; he associated with the dregs of the people, slept in the shops and taverns, changed the costume of his subjects, and even went so far as to spread a rumour that he was not of royal blood. Being of a most ferocious nature, he often ran, with a drawn sword, accompanied by his myrmidons, through the streets, killing everybody who came in his way. The celebrated general, Seaou-taou-ching, who had put down the rebellion, was once asleep in the palace ; Lew-yu observed him for a while, and then drew a circle around his navel, at which he aimed an arrow ; and the general would have perished, if he had not suddenly grasped a shield, and thus intercepted the fatal weapon. From this moment he resolved upon the emperor's ruin. Some eunuchs had joined the conspiracy, and watched an opportunity for murdering their sovereign. Shortly afterwards, the emperor spent a day in a

temple, and returning drunk to his palace, the eunuchs threw him into a bed, and cut off his head. On the next day, the grandees of the empire assembling to choose a new sovereign, appointed unanimously the worthy and brave Seaou-taou-ching: one of them even drew his sword, and threatened to cleave the head of every one who dissented. But the magnanimous general created Lew-shun, the adopted son of Ming-te, emperor—477.

The prince of Wei, whom we have already mentioned, had gained all hearts. Convinced that the mandarins, if they were not kept in check, acted tyrannically, he severely punished every officer who oppressed the people. Two minions of the empress dowager had fallen under his displeasure; his mother besought him to spare their lives, but he remained deaf to her prayers; and the malefactors were executed. This so irritated the mind of this vindictive woman, that, in order to retaliate the death of her favourites, she poisoned her son. She then seized upon the government, and acquitted herself, during the minority of her grandson, so well, that she was beloved by her subjects.

Lew-shun, who adopted the name of Shun-te, was an ephemeral emperor. After his accession to the throne, the enemies of Seaou-taou-ching disapproved of his being chosen emperor.

But the wily general divided the forces of the rebels, and vanquished them one after the other. However, this unexpected success gave him a relish for sovereign power. The principal offices in the government were in the hands of his creatures: he had nominated himself duke of Tse; and afterwards adopted the title of king. Anxious to prevail upon Shun-te to abdicate, he sent one of his friends to the palace, ordering him to remove the whole imperial family to another building. The empress wanted to repel force by force; but Shun-te only wept, and begged that his life might be spared. After he had laid aside all the robes of a sovereign, he was conducted in a cart to the palace which had been prepared for his reception. Here he lived only a few days, when he was assassinated,—479. The imperial crown devolved now upon another family; and the house of Sung was almost extinct: for there remained only a little babe, the last scion.

The reign of this dynasty, though short, proved very beneficial to the welfare of the Chinese empire. To those wicked emperors, who sat upon the throne during the latter end, the power was denied to do as much mischief as they might have done, had not their cruelty been checked.

CHAPTER XIII.

TSE DYNASTY.

FROM 480 TO 502.

SEAOU-TAOU-CHING, the founder of this house, was descended from an illustrious family, and possessed all the talents to render him worthy of the throne. His dynasty took the name from the duchy of Tse, of which he had possessed himself during the reign of Shun-te. He kept his court at Nanking; and therefore it has received the name of Nan-tse—southern Tse. Chinese historians comprise all the dynasties, from Sung to Suy, under the general name of Nan-pih-chaou—southern and northern dynasties; because there existed throughout this whole period, two independent empires in China—the southern and northern; the Chinese and Tatar dynasties.

Seaou-taou-ching's reign was happy, but short. His imperial name was Kaou-te—the exalted emperor: his reign is designated by Këen-yuen. When he had established himself

upon the throne, he proved to be one of the most excellent emperors whom China ever had, and died in 482.

His son, Woo-te, was much devoted to Buddhism, and entertained a great many priests ; but spent a great part of his time in hunting. Once passing through a corn-field, then in the blade, he admired the beauty of it. Fan-yun, one of his friends, remarked : “ You are right ; but you do not remember the pain it has cost. If you would reflect, that this corn has been watered by the sweat of the people, and that it is the result of three seasons of the year, I am confident your hunting parties would give you more pain than pleasure.” From this moment the prince abstained from indulging to excess in the practice of hunting. He died in 493. Under his reign, there lived a very celebrated philosopher, the oracle of the age, Fan-chin. He taught the mortality of the soul, which, in her relation to the body, was like the sharpness of a knife to the body of the knife. He inculcated the doctrines of absolute fate, which no mortal can escape ; and, in fact, taught materialism in its worst shape. Though these tenets have never been acknowledged as an orthodox creed, they constitute the substance of Chinese religion in the higher classes of society.

When Woo-te had died, his grandson came

to the throne, though the government was usurped by Seaou-lun, a president of the highest tribunal ; who, to avoid all evil appearances, promoted Seaou-chaow-yuen to the throne, and shortly afterwards dispossessed him of the imperial diadem, — 494. The northern emperor disapproved of these arbitrary proceedings, and marched with an army against the usurper. Seaou-lun adopted the name of Ming-te ; and sent Seaou-yen, a valiant general, who afterwards became the founder of the next dynasty, to wage war with the northern troops. The imperial forces were defeated ; but Ming-te died before he learned the news of his misfortune. He had been a prince very much addicted to the dreams of the Tao sect ; and his death is ascribed to a nostrum which some priests had administered to him. His third son, Tung-hwan-how, or Paou-keuen, inherited the usurped throne of his father, — 499. But he would have lost his unrighteous possession, if his rival, the northern emperor, had not died suddenly. His successor was a youth devoted to pleasure, and unwilling to prosecute a toilsome war ; so that the contest was carried on languidly. Paou-keuen was a cruel prince ; he murdered the brother of Seaou-yen ; he gained the principal officers to assist him in dethroning the emperor, and exalted his brother, under the name of Ho-

te, to the throne,—501. But, apprehensive of a new revolt, he endeavoured to extirpate the whole race of Tse, took the title of prince of Leang, and strangled Ho-te,—502.

LEANG DYNASTY.

502—557.

Leung-woo-te, the new emperor, seeing himself freed from so dangerous a rival as the old remaining family, had to fight for the possession of the empire with the prince of Wei. During the various campaigns in which he was engaged, he marched against Chow-yang, which was defended by an able general; but he abandoned the city to fight the battles of his sovereign, leaving behind his wife, a very high-minded woman. As soon as she saw the hostile army approaching, she took a sword in her hands, and ascending upon the ramparts, exhorted the soldiers to fight to the last. Though arrows, and other missile weapons, aimed at the garrison, fell around, thick as the mist, she remained immovable. Many who had fought bravely by her side fell lifeless at her feet; but the brave Mung-she fought with redoubled courage, till succour from her husband arrived and raised the siege. But not only occupied with the slaughter of his enemies, he revived ancient

learning and the study of the classics. He himself instituted schools and visited the teachers, heard the boys read, and delighted in their exercises. Such was this emperor, who had spent the greater part of his life amongst the turmoil of war. He, however, showed his ignorance in many things, and was about to sacrifice upon a high mountain to the Supreme Heaven, quite contrary to ancient usage.

The state of Wei sank finally into insignificance, under a young and weak prince ; yet he was married to a woman worthy the high station of an empress. All the high officers were under her control ; and, to show the world that there is, abstractedly, no inequality between the sexes, she undertook to sacrifice to Shang-te, the greatest abomination and profanation which ever could have been committed by any woman in China. But she did not spend her life in idle pomp ; on the contrary, she carried on the war against the Leang-woo-te. However, whilst thus engaged, she suddenly became a zealous protector of the Buddhist sect. To honour the priests, she built a great temple, in which a thousand of them were entertained at her expense. But the Confucians were envious that so great a princess did not honour the learned, and prepared her ruin. She was accused of having lived too free with a young and able

man, and in consequence confined to her palace, where she waited her opportunity, and suddenly declared, in an assembly of the states, that she was about to make herself a priestess. Having made this declaration, she took the fatal knife to shave her head ; but the grandees, seeing that she was in earnest, vehemently besought her to abstain from this resolution. Apparently persuaded, she returned to the palace as the sovereign mistress of her son. During the time of her imprisonment all state affairs had gone wrong ; but as soon as she resumed the reins of state, the administration of government was the wonder of the whole world. She only neglected one grand duty, that of living retired. Instead of imitating the customs of her sex in China, she dared to walk about openly, richly attired ; which irritated the ministers, who told her that a widow ought to be dead to the world, and be absorbed in contemplating her irreparable loss. This doctrine was not very palatable to a princess who lived solely for the honour and the benefit of her nation, but who could forgive and profit by these remarks.

Whilst this lady swayed the northern states, Leang-woo-te, an effeminate man, became a priest of Buddha, living according to all the rites of Shamanism. He had issued orders that no animals (pigs even included) should be killed

in any part of the empire, he himself setting the best example by living upon a vegetable diet. But he was not allowed to remain long in the monastery; for the grandees of the empire threatened to drag him out by force if he did not immediately resume his duties; and when the priests refused to relinquish their royal convert, the ministers wished to set fire to the temple and burn the whole hive of lazy drones. Even when they had released the emperor, who parted from them reluctantly, the ministers insisted upon killing the deceivers, but were forbidden by the monarch. We are astonished that so great a warrior should have become so imbecile as to believe in idle stories, in mere nonsense, and descend from his throne when the country was in danger of being overrun by a formidable enemy.

The sage princess Hoo-she might have rendered her nation happy, if the grandees who felt themselves so much degraded by being ruled by a woman, had not counteracted her orders. Being finally charged with having poisoned her son, she was so shocked with this imputation that she shaved her head and became a nun, in order never to appear again in the world.

If the imbecile Woo-te had been content with rendering homage to the priests it would have been well for the country, but by his mis-

management he protracted a war which exhausted the resources of the empire. Many battles were fought, soldiers advanced and retreated, cities were taken and retaken, the Tatars also began to threaten an incursion; and the result of all was, that the country was impoverished and the peasantry rendered wretched. But, notwithstanding this great political error, Woo-te was, in his latter days, a sober, meek-minded man, an emperor who had bade farewell to the Confucian doctrines, because they did not give satisfaction upon the most essential points—the immortality of the soul and the existence of a Supreme Being. He discarded one negative evil, and fell into positive and gross errors. Under his reign a son offered to die for his father, who had committed a great crime. This fervent, filial piety touched Woo-te greatly, and he decreed honours to this dutiful son; but the youth rejected them, because they would put him only in remembrance of his father's errors and crimes.

This prince died in the utmost misery. One of his generals, How-king, had become more powerful than his master; he therefore charged the emperor with neglect of government, and laid siege to the capital, which he finally took. When coming into the presence of his sove-

reign, he was struck with awe, and trembling, fell upon his knees. "Are you not yet tired with waging war?" asked the emperor coolly. How-king had braved death in the thickest of the battle; the sword which was to cleave his head had been uplifted; but his courage now forsook him, and he was terrified by the majesty of Heaven's Son. After this interview however he set to plundering the capital, which he rendered almost desolate. Woo-te died broken-hearted, and forsaken by the whole world, whilst How-king lived an effeminate life in the palace. His third son, Këen-wan-te, succeeded him. But the ambitious How-king could no longer brook a superior, and slew the emperor. The day of vengeance, however, very soon arrived; the whole empire rose up against the murderer; he was repeatedly defeated, and finally slain; and Yuen-te, the descendant of the founder of the Leang dynasty, ascended the throne, 352. The first act of this emperor was to send an army against his brother, Leaou-ke, to humble him, for he was a very great general. China was scarcely ever at rest. One calamity had passed, another fell with double fury upon the country. Amongst this carnage, the prince of Tse concerted a plan of uniting the sects of Taou and Buddha; he therefore invited the priests of both parties to his palace, where they

held disputations, in which one sect charged the other with great abominations. The prince, irritated at what he heard, would have driven them both away; but he felt some affection for the Buddhist priests, and therefore ordered all the Taou priests to conform to the Buddhaistical rites, by shaving the head and fasting.

Shin-pa-sëen, who had freed the country from a tyrant, became one in his turn; and whilst the emperor, in his palace, busied himself with unravelling the dreams of the Taou sect, he attacked the capital. At the sight of this enemy the prince lost all courage, broke his sword to pieces, as fighting had now become useless, and burnt the library which he had collected, learning being now of no avail. When he had thus rid himself of all that was precious, he went out of the city on a white horse and surrendered to the victor, who immediately ordered him to be beheaded.

It seems, that all those who had tasted of the elixir of immortality died the earlier for it. Amongst the hundreds of Chinese emperors, there is not one prince who was able to rule over the nation after having given himself up to Taouism, a labyrinth of nonsense, not very dissimilar to some of the philosophic systems of modern date.

The northern parts of the empire had hitherto

been ruled by the Topa Tatars, but Yu-yuen-hoo, a very influential minister, dethroned this family, who had reigned in the kingdom of Wei 149 years, whilst he himself proceeded to occupy the vacant throne of Wei, 556. At that time reigned King-te, the last scion of the Leang dynasty, who remunerated the murderer of his brother Yuen-te, by making him prime minister. Yu-yuen-hoo, his rival, refused to adopt the imperial title, but could only maintain himself for a short time in authority; for the Chinese nobles were restless in the plotting of plans for the destruction of those in power. Anxious to imitate the ancients, whom he enthusiastically admired, he called his empire Chow; and Chin-pa-seën, the usurper, called his Chin. When King-te saw that he retained nothing but the mere name of emperor, he thought it best to surrender his empty title to Chin-pa-seën, 557. Thus the Leang dynasty was extinguished.

CHIN DYNASTY.

FROM 557 TO 589, A. D.

Kaou-tsoo, for this was the name which Chin-pa-seën had adopted, had his throne dyed with blood—how could he prosper? He was a decided enemy to pomp and useless luxury, and discarded both music and play. When he saw his end approaching, he nominated his nephew, Chin-tseën, his successor, who afterwards reigned under the name of Wan-te, 559. In this year died Kaou-yang, prince of Tsi, a monster of wickedness, who had made the most accurate researches after the posterity of the former rulers of Wei, and daily bathed his hands in blood, in order to establish his tottering throne; and his debaucheries rather surpassed his cruelties. Observing once, that the widow of his prime minister, whom he had unjustly executed, was standing at the grave weeping, he asked the lady, whether she still thought about her husband after his death. On being answered in the affirmative, he drew his sword and cleft her head, saying, “join your husband in the other world.”—Scarcely was the unruly prince of Tse brought to reason, when another rebellion, headed by one of the first generals, broke out in the heart of the empire. Wan-tee was a very wise and judicious prince. To furnish the expences

for the war, he retrenched his own household, and spared the substance of the people ; but the beginning of discontent injured the state, and it was expected, that China would be involved in a long war. The emperor died before he was able to quell the rebellion, in 566. His son, Petsung, or Lin-hwae-wang, whom history also calls Fe-te, “the deposed emperor,” succeeded him. As he was a young and weak prince, his uncle, Chin-heu, who ascended the throne under the name of Seuen-te, collected a large army, fought against the enemies of the empire with great success, and, supported by the empress dowager, dethroned his nephew, 568. During his reign, the principality of Chow became extinct. The princes hoped to enlarge their territory by dismembering the state of Tse. A powerful minister, who was entrusted with the hereditary government of the state of Suy, hastened the ruin of the Chow family.

When the emperor lay dying, he was surrounded by his sons. Chin-shoo-ling, who was one of them, aimed a death blow at the heir of the crown ; the empress, who hastened to the aid of her son, was also wounded, but another of his brothers drove this monster out of the palace, and whilst on his flight to the Suy estate, killed him, 582. How-te ascended the throne of his father, and was only bent upon making his life

easy and agreeable ; for which purpose he built splendid apartments, planted delicious groves, with cascades and flower-beds, and spent his days in the midst of women and eunuchs. Yang-keën waited till the three years of mourning for his father were over, and then marched against Nan-king, took the capital without resistance, and found the whole imperial family hidden in a well ; he drew them out, and granted them life. Having no rival, he ascended the throne. The two separate empires,—the Nan and Yuh-chou, Northern and Southern empires, which had commenced in 420, during the reign of the Tsin dynasty, were united by Yang-keën into one. He was the founder of the Suy dynasty.

SUY DYNASTY.

FROM 590 TO 618, A. D.

Yang-keën, who now wore the imperial diadem, was fond of sovereign power, and as soon as he had seated himself firmly upon the throne, he acted according to his own discretion, without asking the advice of his friends. The Tatar princes, when they heard that Suy had united the whole Chinese empire, began to tremble for their existence. They were willing to prostrate themselves before the conqueror, when a Tatar princess opposed the victor, and revenged the

insult done to her, by ordering her people to ravage the frontiers. To put a stop to these repeated invasions, the emperor bestowed on one of the Tatar chiefs an imperial princess ; but his countrymen, envious of the great honour done to him, declared war against the favourite ; and thus embroiled in domestic quarrels, their attention was wholly occupied with avenging their private wrongs, and the emperor was able to fortify the frontiers against their invasions. The king of Korea, thinking himself powerful enough to maintain his independence, refused to pay tribute, for which he was severely chastised, and forced to send an ambassador to sue for peace and mercy. The emperor would have been happy upon his throne, if his own family had not been disturbed by discord. Having nominated an heir to the crown, the brother of this prince, an ambitious, intriguing, worthless man, persuaded the empress to use her influence in prevailing on the monarch to disinherit him ; having succeeded in his endeavours, he became insolent, and even attempted to violate one of the emperor's wives. When this circumstance was reported to the emperor, he was on his death-bed, but indignant at having cherished the viper in his bosom, immediately dispatched a messenger to recal his injured son, and to reinstate him in his former dignity ; but he breathed his

last, before the affair was settled, dying with regret that he had been so imprudent as to entrust the government of so large an empire to such a monster of wickedness, 604.

Wan-te held with a vigorous grasp the government of the whole empire, transacting every affair of importance himself, and watching over the faithless mandarins. Munificent in his rewards, he himself was exceedingly plain in his habits, and exercised the greatest economy in the maintenance of his own family. He loved the people, and yearned for them like a father. Without having constantly the names of Yaou and Shun in his mouth, he imitated their benevolence, and adopted their principles. During his administration, ancient learning began again to flourish, and the nation revived. His ancestral name is Kaou-tsao.

The vile usurper, Yang-kwan, forced his elder brother, the rightful heir of the crown, to strangle himself, and then yielded himself up to the most enervating luxury in the gardens he had built. In these delicious and spacious grounds, he rode about on horseback, with a train of 1000 ladies, who chaunted and played upon instruments. Thus buried in pleasures, he spent a great part of his days in idleness. The full treasure of his parsimonious father lasted him for many years; he had only to

to squander what had been amassed by many a drop of blood.

But at length, growing tired with this voluptuous life, he dug canals, and opened communications with the most distant parts of the empire. Indignant at the obstinacy of the Koreans, who would not willingly submit to the Son of Heaven, he attacked the country by land and by water. Three expeditions proving ineffectual, the imperial soldiers looked about them with dark despair; but after many losses, and having suffered starvation and cold, the obstinate Yang-te was forced to take the field. But the Koreans had also lost their courage, and were glad to conclude a treaty, which secured their existence as a nation. When Yan-te returned to his territory, he found the whole empire in a state of rebellion, one governor after the other endeavouring to render himself independent. Amongst this chaos of confusion, Le-yuen, the ancestor of the celebrated family Tang, being an able general, rose to great importance. He had also four sons, who possessed great talents, and aided their father in the acquisition of power.

The emperor was on a tour, in Keang-nan, when a man of low rank assassinated him. Le-yuen, therefore, who was now a man of great influence, put the crown upon the head of Kung-te, whilst he reserved for himself the offices

of prime-minister and regent, 617. His coronation was mere mockery: the same hand which had exalted him, forced him also to descend from the throne, which, according to appearances, he voluntarily abdicated. But he did not outlive his dishonour: a poisonous drug was administered; and, as soon as he felt the effect of it, he fell upon his knees, and prayed that Buddha might never permit his being born again an emperor. As, however, the poison had not immediately the desired effect, they passed a silken cord around his neck, and strangled him, 619.*

* See *Histoire Générale*; Du Halde; Wang-wan, *History of the Tsin Dynasty*; Yang-tso, *History of the Han and Tsin Dynasties*; Yu-paou, *Annals of China*; Tsin Dynasty; Seu-kwang, *Annals of Tsin*; Chin-yo, *Annals of Tsin and Sung*, and Tse; Tsuy-haou, *History of Tsin*; Wei-we, *History of Suy*; and other Chinese histories.

CHAPTER XIV.

TANG DYNASTY.

FROM 619 TO 907, A. D.

WE have mentioned the name of the founder, Le-yuen, who was of the illustrious house of Leang. His great talents and valour made him an object of suspicion. The emperor, in order to free himself from so great a warrior in an honourable way, sent him into a province which was ravaged by Tatars as well as robbers; and as he had only a few troops about him, it seemed certain that he would very soon fall a victim to dark revenge: but under such critical circumstances, the hero was formed. He had, by his own resources, to supply the want of adequate forces; to vanquish a brave and crafty enemy; to deliver the country from banditti, who infested all the recesses; and thus became the best warrior of his age. As soon as he had given

proofs of his superior skill in martial exploits, the disbanded soldiers of rebel chiefs joined his standards; his army increased; he declared himself independent; and, within six years, subjugated the whole celestial empire. At the commencement of his reign, China came in contact with a nation, whose wild valour and barbarous cruelty had been once formidable, and ruined the extensive empire of the Arabs. A naked, uncultivated tribe, from the dreary regions of Asia, conquered the Khaliphs, and founded in civilized Europe an empire, which still subsists. As their history is connected with that of the Chinese, it must, for a moment, command our attention.

At the foot of the Imaüs, the Turks, a small, insignificant tribe of slaves, occupied with digging iron, served the great khan of the Geougen. Their first ancestor had been suckled by a she-wolf; and thus was savage bravery transfused into the veins of all his posterity. Born to slavery, they were cheerful under servitude, until it became intolerable. Bertezena, their first leader, harangued his countrymen, pointed out to them their abject state, and exhorted them to shake off the yoke. This horde of smiths and armourers sallied forth; and, with all the energy of a nation emerging from barba-

rism, conquered several neighbouring tribes. To remind the nation of their humble origin, the prince, and leader himself, with his nobles, heated, annually, a piece of iron, and took with their own hands a hammer to beat it.

When their power was increased, they demanded their freedom from their old masters; and, to secure this, Bertezena asked the daughter of the great khan in marriage. His request was rejected with the utmost disdain; in revenge for which, the Turks attacked their old master, and defeated his army. The Chinese prince of Wei, in Shen-se, a bitter enemy of Geougen, took the conqueror under his protection; and, to remunerate the services he had done him and China, by subduing an inveterate foe, he gave him his own daughter in marriage. Nomades, like the Huns, they despised the arts of civilized life. One of the successors of Bertezena, whom the Chinese call Moo-kan, was allured by the luxuries of China, and wished to build villages and cities; but this design was defeated by one of his councillors, who said: "The Turks are not equal to one-hundredth part of the inhabitants of China. If we balance their power, and elude their armies, it is because we wander, without any fixed habitation, in the exercise of war and hunting. Are we strong, we advance

and conquer; are we feeble, we retire, and are concealed. Should the Turks confine themselves within the walls of cities, the loss of a battle would be the destruction of their empire."

Their religion was vague: they worshipped the gods of the air, the wind, and the rivers. Their laws were rigorous and impartial; theft was punished by a tenfold restitution; adultery, treason, and murder, with death. The punishment for the inextinguishable guilt of cowardice was horrible. The throne of their chief was turned towards the east; and a golden wolf, mounted on the top of a spear, guarded the entrance to his tent. As soon as a youth was capable of bearing arms, he received and wore them till his death. Their armies were as numerous as swarms of grasshoppers; and, within the space of fifty years, they had united under their standards numerous Tatar tribes; and were connected, in peace and war, with the Romans, Persians, and Chinese; having conquered the White Huns on the plains of Bokhara and Samarkand, they carried their victorious arms to the Indus. But though they thus extended their conquests in every direction, their chief still kept his court in the ancient abode of their ancestors, at the foot of the Imaüs. Had not their extensive empire been divided into five

different kingdoms, they might, perhaps, have subjected the world to their sway; but these divisions created continual wars, and reduced the power of these wild conquerors to nothing; and five independent kingdoms were erected upon the ruins of the Turkish empire. The founder of the Tang dynasty, trembling at such a neighbour as the Turks, treacherously delivered up to the Hosona, a Tatar prince who had taken refuge in China. When the Turkish ambassadors arrived at the Chinese court, in 619, they were received with due honours; and Heaven's son stooped greatly from his dignity to conciliate their good-will. Indeed, it is said, that the heroic Chinese fought against them with gold and silver lances,—a formidable weapon! — and thus averted an invasion which might have fixed the Turks in China, and freed Europe from this scourge. But, directing their vast martial force towards the West, (guided, perhaps, by a higher hand, which disposes of the empires of the world,) they produced one of those great revolutions which have had a lasting influence upon all the countries we inhabit. The Mongol conquests ceased in Europe with the conqueror who made them, whilst the baneful influence of Turkish dominion is still felt; and though the foundation of this stronghold of fanaticism has been undermined, though the

Turkish empire, now in a state of dotage, is tottering to its basis, it is still suffered to exist.

In the rapid career of Western conquest, the Turks attacked the Ogors or Varchonites, and subdued them; a small portion only of this mighty nation preferred death and exile to servitude, the others were amalgamated with the victors. Following the course of the Wolga, the Turks spread consternation before them, and being confounded with the savage Avars, their name was quite sufficient to strike a whole army with utter dismay. At the foot of the Caucasus they first heard of the splendour and riches of the Roman empire. Anxious to discover the golden mountains which contained all these treasures, they sent an embassy to Justinian, 558, with this address: "You see before you, O mighty prince, the representatives of the strongest and most populous of nations, the invincible, the irresistible Avars. We are willing to devote ourselves to your service; we are able to vanquish and to destroy all the enemies who now disturb your repose, but we expect, as the price of our alliance, as the reward of our valour, precious gifts, annual subsidies, and fruitful possessions."

Justinian acted in this case like a Chinese emperor, purchasing the friendship of the fiercest

Turks, who had now adopted the name of Avars; and to captivate them in the nets of luxury, presented the ambassadors with silken garments, soft and splendid beds, and chains and collars embossed in gold; and thus bribed, they returned with an imperial ambassador to their dreary abodes. Roman policy now engaging the fiercer barbarians in war with the enemies of the empire, they fought against the Bulgarians and Slavonians, and reduced them to vassalage; but finding themselves to have been the dupes of Roman intrigue, they had not concluded their wars with the Slavonic tribes when they passed the Borysthenes, and boldly advanced into the heart of Poland and Germany, pursuing the footsteps of their enemies to Jaik, the Wolga, mount Caucasus, the Euxine, and Constantinople, and insisting that the emperor should not espouse the cause of rebels and fugitives. The Sogdoites, who had become Turkish vassals, seized this fair opportunity of opening, to the north of the Caspian, a new road for the importation of Chinese silks into the Roman empire; but the Persians, who preferred the trade to Ceylon, saw with reluctance these new rivals, stopped the caravans of Bokhara and Samarkand, and burned their silks. A Turkish ambassador having died, as was surmised, by poison at the Persian court, the Sog-

doite ambassadors proposed a treaty of alliance to the Byzantine court, which was accepted, and ratified by a Roman embassy sent to mount Altai. But when the Turks perceived that they were not assisted by their new allies in the war against Chosroës, they bitterly upbraided their perfidy. “You Romans,” the Turkish sovereign said, addressing the Byzantine ambassador, “speak with many tongues, but they are tongues of deceit and perjury. To me you hold one language, to my subjects another, and the nations are successively deluded by your perfidious eloquence. You precipitate your allies into war and danger, enjoy their labours, and neglect your benefactors. Hasten your return; inform your master that a Turk is incapable of uttering or forgiving falsehood, and that he shall speedily meet the punishment which he deserves. While he solicits my friendship with hollow and flattering words, he is sunk to a confederate of my fugitive Varchonites. If I condescend to march against those contemptible slaves, they will tremble at the sound of our whips, they will be trampled like a nest of ants under the feet of my innumerable cavalry. I am ignorant of the road they have followed to invade your empire, nor can I be deceived by the vain pretence that mount Caucasus is the impregnable barrier of the Romans. I know the

course of the Niester, the Danube, and the Hebrus; the most warlike nations have yielded to the arms of the Turks; and from the rising to the setting sun the earth is my inheritance.”*

Notwithstanding this harsh speech, a treaty was concluded; and in 626, the emperor Heraclius renewed the alliance against the proud Persians and the savage, ancient Avars. At his liberal invitation, the hordes of Chozars transported their tents from the plains of the Volga to the mountains of Georgia; Heraclius received them in the neighbourhood of Tiflis, where the khan, with his nobles, dismounted from their horses, and fell prostrate on the ground, to adore the purple of the Cæsar. The emperor took off his diadem and placed it on the head of the Turkish prince, whom he saluted with a tender embrace and the appellation of son; and after having presented the khan with rich presents, he flattered him with the prospect of an imperial alliance. Having thus negotiated a strong diversion of the Turkish arms, the tide of conquest was directed towards the Oxus, where the Persians were discomfited. Finally, when the Arabs emerged from the deserts, and their khaliphs were firmly seated upon the throne of the Prophet, they

* Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. vii. pp. 294-297.

preferred, during the time of the decline of the empire, a Turkish body-guard to their own native troops, the khaliph Mstassem introducing into the capital about fifty thousand of these mercenaries. The licentiousness of these foreigners, however, provoked the indignation of the faithful believers in Mohammed, and the khaliph was compelled to remove from Bagdad to Samara, a city on the Tigris, where his son Motawakkel, a cruel and jealous tyrant, was at length murdered by the same troops by whose aid he supported his cruelties. His son, the instigator of this murder, died of remorse, and the ensigns of royalty, the garment and walking-staff of Mohammed, fell into the hands of the Turks, who now exercised over their former masters the most unlimited sway. As often as these hordes were inflamed by fear or rage, or avarice, the khaliphs were dragged forth by the feet, exposed naked to the scorching sun, beaten with iron clubs, and compelled to purchase, by the abdication of their dignity, a short reprieve from their inevitable fate. The numbers of these fearful hordes were afterwards thinned in the foreign wars of the Arabs; but having once tasted of the sweets of luxury, their passions were kindled, and their countrymen afterwards became the conquerors of the invincible Arabs.

Several of the hordes had settled in Hun-

garia, where they amalgamated with the Huns. Their first conquests and final settlements extended on either side of the Danube, above Vienna, below Belgrade, and beyond the ancient province of Pannonia. The German emperor, Arnulph, a traitor to his country, invoked their help, in 900 ; and during the minority of the son of the emperor, Lewis, those savage allies invaded Germany. Such was the speed of these locusts in human shape, that in a single day a circuit of fifty miles was stripped and consumed. In the battle of Augsburgh, maintained from morning till evening, they had almost conquered these implacable enemies, when their whole army, by the flying stratagem of the Turkish cavalry, was devoted to ruin and destruction. For more than thirty years Germany groaned under the payment of an ignominious tribute, and if a refractory spirit was shown, the savage Turks dragged the women and children into captivity, whilst all the males above the age of ten years were slaughtered in cold blood. These implacable enemies almost at the same time reduced to ashes Bremen, and the monastery of St. Gall, in Helvetia ; and it is said, that they penetrated to the southern provinces of France, and even threatened Spain with an invasion. When on the verge of spreading destruction in Italy, they began to tremble

at the force so populous a country could oppose to their inroads, and requested to retreat unmolested. The Italian king proudly rejected their demand; an engagement ensued, and 20,000 Christians left on the field of battle afforded a palpable demonstration of the utter defeat of the Italian forces. The Turks, or rather Hungarians, appeared before Pavia; the city was devoted to the flames, the inhabitants were massacred, and only two hundred wretches were spared, because they had collected about two hundred bushels of gold and silver from the smoking ruins of their once flourishing city. Nothing could arrest the torrent of destruction, the savage victors arrived in Calabria, and then returned with the spoils of this unhappy country, to spread devastation in other parts of the globe. Hitherto the Bulgarians had served as a dyke against the torrent of their invasions into the Byzantine empire; but this barrier also was carried away with irresistible force, and the emperor of Constantinople saw before his gates the waving banners of the Turks, 924. Though they had approached its walls, and struck a battle-axe into the golden gate, the pillage and utter destruction of this celebrated capital was averted by immense contributions, and an ignominious peace.

China, though often attacked, was never sub-

dued by the Turks; but, on the contrary, it has repeatedly repulsed their elsewhere victorious armies.

Kaou-tsoo, a man of noble family, and great qualities, rekindled the valour of the Chinese, encouraged them in arts and sciences, and afterwards defeated the Tatars, an unruly, untameable race. He was an enemy to the Buddhist priests, and threatened them with an entire expulsion. Beholding the grasshoppers doing great injury, he vehemently exclaimed, "Ye animals, why do you eat up the sustenance of my people, wherefore do you not devour my entrails?" After a long, happy, and glorious reign, he died in 649. Kaou-tsung Shing-kwan, his successor, was a warlike prince, who extended his conquests as far as Persia, and subjugated the Taofan tribe.

Chung-tsung began to reign in 684; but, by a strange concurrence of circumstances, Woo-woo-how, his mother, the empress dowager, acquired the power of keeping him in confinement. She tyrannized, with unheard of cruelty, over the whole imperial family, treating the princes of the blood like slaves; and, to show her independence, arrayed herself in imperial robes and sacrificed to heaven and earth; at the same time changing the designation of the dynasty into Chow, and blotting out the names of the imperial princes from the records. But in fact

Chung-tsung did not deserve to reign, being a weak, debauched prince, who deserved confinement or banishment. His wife, however, was an excellent princess, who bestowed the utmost care upon the government of the palace. His brother, Juy-tsung, who succeeded him in 710, was followed by Heuen-tsung, a wise prince, who encouraged learning and literature, established colleges, nominated doctors, published books, and invited his subjects to study the classics. But the end did not correspond with this fine commencement; for he drowned his queen, and killed his children; for which the divine vengeance fell upon him, so that he had to flee before his rebellious subjects to Sze-chuen. His son, Tih-tsung, saved him from utter disgrace, by subduing the rebels, and recalling his father from exile. His death, however, soon followed. The Taofan, who had been restless during the preceding reigns, now repeatedly invaded the empire, their incursions being directed towards Sze-chuen, where their cruel and relentless barbarism laid whole districts waste. The reign of Tae-tsung was stormy; and Tih-tsung, his successor, allowed the eunuchs too much influence, but proved victorious against the rebels and Tatars. His successor, Shun-tsung, abdicated, after a reign of one year. Heën-tsung, his son, a very wise prince, 805, reformed all

branches of government, and examined into the acts of the mandarins ; but he also had his weakness. Having heard that there existed a precious relic of Buddha—one of his fingers—in Shen-se, he caused it to be transported to the capital, in a magnificent procession, in defiance of the remonstrances made by the tribunal of rites. As he was desirous of living for ever upon earth, he sought the elixir of immortality, drank it, and died ! But, before the poison took effect, whilst suffering the agonies which terminated in death, he executed a number of eunuchs, who had been engaged in this transaction. Muh-tsung, who only lived for his pleasures, showed great disrespect for his father's memory, by mourning only one month instead of three years. He at first banished the Taou-tsze, and other magicians ; but was very soon entangled in their nets, and poisoned himself, like his father, with the elixir of immortality. King-tsung, his successor, was suffocated in his bed, by the eunuchs, whose power he was anxious to reduce. Nothing could be so strong a proof of the decline of this dynasty, as the reign of these worthless eunuchs, who daily became more and more powerful.

Woo-tsung, who ascended the throne A. D. 840, was a great emperor, who saw the misery

which afflicted the country, and remedied it effectually. The Taofan, or Tibetians, were, by his policy, engaged in intestine wars, and the empire was thus freed from their incursions. Woo-tsung also poisoned himself with the potion of immortality. It is difficult to account for the despicable folly of these princes, who, seeing that so many emperors had died from the effects of this elixir, yet betook themselves to it again and again, to the destruction of their health and life.

The eunuchs now controlled all the affairs of government, the emperors being nothing but their creatures, chosen for their imbecility from amongst the imperial princes. Of this class of sovereigns was Seu-en-tsung, who having, perhaps, acted idiotcy, like the elder Brutus, was raised to the throne for his superior stupidity. But they had greatly deceived themselves in their choice, for this youth very soon discovered the greatest talents. His first enterprise was the attempted extirpation of the eunuchs, in which he was zealously seconded by the prime minister, their decided enemy. But the united powers of the prime minister and the emperor were insufficient to overthrow their tyranny; and they were ultimately delivered from their enemies by the liquor of immortality.

Wars and discord reduced the empire to the

brink of ruin, under E-tsung, a prince who lived only for his pleasures, his greatest action being the discovery of a bone of Buddha, which he brought to the capital in great state. He left the empire in a ruinous condition to his son, He-tsung, a boy of 12 years, who succeeded him A. D. 874. The imperial treasury had been exhausted under E-tsung. The new reign was ushered in by a great drought and general scarcity; but the emperor, placed beyond the reach of penury and want, spared not his afflicted subjects, who at length preferred abandoning their fields and retiring into the woods, to suffering any longer the heavy exactions imposed upon them. The soldiers, seeking to drive them back to their homes, were beaten; which emboldened the rebels to proceed, and one province after the other breaking out into open revolt, the whole empire verged towards destruction. But there was still a brave general, Le-ke-yung, whose posterity sat upon the imperial throne, who defended the cause of the emperor with his sword. Chaou-tsung wanted none of the good qualities necessary for ruling an extensive empire. Ascending the throne in 888, his first care was to reform the government, in which he would have made great improvements, had not the eunuchs seized and confined him in a hole with only one aperture to let in food. To such

ignominious treatment had the emperors of China subjected themselves. His prime minister however, relieved him from this shameful imprisonment; and as soon as he had escaped out of their hands, he devoted the whole number to destruction. He therefore invoked the help of robbers, and gave them full liberty to exercise their art upon these wretches. These freebooters acquitted themselves so well of their trust, that only a few eunuchs escaped the general slaughter, and the empire was freed from this plague. However, the imperial dynasty of Tang no more recovered from its weakness. Choo-wan, prince of Leang, having grown powerful, aimed at the sovereignty; he accordingly murdered the emperor, and promoted Chaou-seuen-te to the throne A. D. 905. This prince, however, very soon saw that it would be his inevitable ruin, if he maintained himself any longer upon the throne, and therefore abdicated in favour of Choo-wan, prince of Leang, who bestowed upon him a small principality. In this degraded state he lived for three years, when he was assassinated.

We have now arrived at the termination of the Tang dynasty. How so extensive an empire as that of China could be kept together, under princes like these, it is difficult to explain. They were unable to reign even over their own

court; how then could they govern so numerous a nation as the Chinese?

The five following dynasties are called, by the Chinese, *Woo-tae* — “the five generations, or ages.” As their history, however, consists of nothing but a detail of petty wars and bloodshed, we may be very brief in our relation.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WOO-TAE.

HOW-LEANG, HOW-TANG, HOW-TSIN, HOW-HAN,
HOW-CHOW.

FROM A. D. 907 TO 959.

HOW-LEANG.

THE Tatars of Leaou-tung, who had made themselves masters of a great part of China, originally came from the desert of Kobi, and settled themselves in the fertile regions of the peninsula.

Tae-tsoo, prince of Leang, who now sat upon the throne, which he had gained by repeated acts of cruelty, was assassinated by his own son. His brother, who afterwards reigned, under the name of Muh-te, or Leang-choo-chin, revenged this parricide, and began to reign, A. D. 913. The prince of Tsin rose in rebellion against his liege lord, crossed the Yellow River during the winter, when it was frozen, and

threw the court into utter consternation. It was very evident that the reign of the Leang dynasty was at an end; and a descendant of the famous Le-ke-kung, a great general, mounted the throne of China, and became the founder of the How-tang dynasty, A. D. 923.

HOW-TANG.

Chwang-tsao, the first emperor of this line, had been inured to hardships from his early youth; but, as soon as he had ascended the throne, he degenerated into a voluptuary, spent his life amongst women, and, like Nero, occasionally sought to distinguish himself as an actor. He was, besides, extremely avaricious, and oppressive towards his subjects; but, in usurping the throne, he prudently pretended that he only wished to revenge the injuries done to the Tang family; and therefore he adopted the same name for his own house. He had to suppress several rebellions, and was successful in quelling them; but was at length killed by an arrow. Ming-tsung, his successor, A. D. 926, was a Tatar by birth; who had followed Le-ke-yung, the father of Chwang-tsung, in his wars, and was adopted as his son. Though born a barbarian, he displayed considerable prudence. Under his government, China again began to revive; the

people rejoiced; and though the Tatars attacked the frontiers, they were not successful. The great blessings which descended upon the empire were ascribed to his piety.

His son, Min-te, who succeeded to the throne in 934, was surrounded by young councilors, who led him to adopt Utopian plans, whereby the empire was thrown into a state of anarchy. The prince of Lao, his brother, coming to the capital, in order to render the last duties to his deceased parent, was there proclaimed emperor, by the empress dowager, 934. To establish his throne, he killed his brother, with the whole family; but he was very soon attacked, in his turn, by She-king-tang; and all his troops refusing to carry arms against the usurper, the emperor was finally left, without resources, at Lo-yang, where seeing no means of escape, he called together his whole family, and, collecting all the badges of the imperial dignity, he set them on fire; and, at the same time, burnt himself to death, with his wife and family, A. D. 936.

HOW-TSIN.

She-ke-tang, though of low extraction, exhibited great talents, and enjoyed the imperial favour. He was the founder of the How-tsin

dynasty; but at the commencement of his reign, a solar eclipse happened, which was said to augur evil to the new dynasty. He was compelled to conclude an ignominious peace with the Tatars, who had assisted him in waging war against the emperor; and ceded to them several districts in the province of Pih-chih-le. He adopted the name of Kaou-tsoo; but occupied the throne a very few years.

Tse-wang, or Chuh-te, succeeded him, 943. The eastern Tatars, having now grown insolent, and invading China with a powerful army, Tse-wang sent against them Lew-che-yuen, a very able general, who marched with a numerous army, not to subdue the enemy, but to put the imperial crown upon his own head. The Tatars, emboldened by not meeting resistance, took the emperor prisoner, and proclaimed Le-tsung-e his successor. He had been a prince of How; and feeling his own inability and weakness, in A. D. 947, yielded up the imperial diadem to Lew-che-yuen, who gave the name of How-han to his short-lived dynasty.

HOW-HAN.

Le-che-yuen, a soldier of fortune, repelled the haughty Tatars, and inspired them with awe; but he reigned too short a time to do much for

the empire, which had severely suffered. His son, Yin-te, was a weak prince, under whom the western provinces revolted; and the emperor was unable to quell the rebellion; for his general, whom he had sent against them, went over to the rebels. He was, at first, therefore, humbled by misfortunes; but when success crowned his arms, he forgot his faithful servants, and acted like a tyrant towards his best friends, whilst worthless voluptuaries were his only councillors. Whilst engaged in quelling a rebellion, he was slain, in 950. His brother, Lew-pin, succeeded him; but was unable to maintain himself against his general, Kwo-wei, who laid the foundation of another dynasty.

HOW-CHOW.

The empress, seeing no possibility of maintaining her son upon the throne, herself proclaimed Kwo-wei emperor. Many generals and governors disapproved of this choice; but the wise measures of Kwo-wei, who had adopted the name of Tae-tsoo, put a stop to dissension and war. The government, after his death, in 954, devolved upon She-tsung, a wise and amiable prince, who always kept the instruments of husbandry in his palace to remind him of his low extraction. He had to wage war against

the prince of Han, who refused to acknowledge his authority ; and China was now again divided into many petty states, which maintained their independence against the emperors. She-tsung laboured to remove this evil ; but encountered too obstinate a resistance. When, however, he had somewhat humbled them, he turned his attention towards the Tatars, the implacable enemies of the empire. It was his intention to chase these barbarians beyond the frontiers ; but his generals, contemplating the dangers which might attend such an undertaking, were unwilling to second his views. After having gained some advantages over them, he withdrew from Leaou-tung. Few princes applied themselves so earnestly to give satisfaction to the whole nation. He severely punished the crimes of the mandarins, and insisted that every one should strictly perform his duty. An enemy to idolatry, he pulled down the temples, and expelled the useless drones from their haunts. At the same time, he encouraged literature, and perused himself the best books.

His successor, Kung-te, son of She-tsung, prince of Lëang, being still very young, was put under the guardianship of Chaou-kwang-yin, an experienced minister. His known integrity was highly valued by the commanders of the imperial army. They despised the child, who

sat upon the throne, and resolved to substitute Chaou-kwang-yin. It was reported at court, that the princes of Han meditated an attack upon China, in conjunction with the Tatars of Leaou-tung. The imperial council gave orders to prevent this attack to Chaou-kwang-yin, who was equally celebrated in the field and in the cabinet. As soon as he showed himself, there arose a general cry of the people, who exclaimed: "This general is worthy to command the army, and ought to be raised to the throne." An astrologer, who pretended to see two suns in Heaven, strengthened them in their predilections, and Chaou-kwang-yin, the founder of the Sung dynasty, was proclaimed emperor, but reluctantly accepted this high dignity. Whilst expostulating with the ministers of state, Lo-yin-hwan, a general officer, entered the council chamber sword in hand, saying, "the empire has no lord, and we want to create one; can we make a better choice than of this, our General, Chaou-kwang-yin? He then yielded, and received a memorial, containing the abdication of the young emperor.*

* See *Histoire Générale*, vol. vi. and vii. Lew-he, *Annals of Tang*, Sang-kung-lëang, *History of Tang*. Shih-këae, complete history of Tang.

SUNG DYNASTY.

FROM 960 TO 1279, A. D.

Chaou-kwang-yin, who received the name of Kaou-tsoo — “Grand-exalted Sire,” was descended from a family which held high offices of state. At his inauguration, he published a general amnesty, confirmed the mandarins in their respective appointments; and raised his ancestors for four generations to imperial rank. Though he himself was not well versed in literature, he established colleges, and encouraged learning by great rewards. An enemy to luxury, he kept the female branches of his family under great restrictions, and caused them to be sparing in their attire. By showing the utmost clemency towards his enemies, he expected to induce them to submission; but the independent states, refusing to acknowledge his authority, their obstinacy induced him to march against them with a numerous army, to force them into terms. The prince of Choo being pressed by the imperial army, tendered his resignation, in the most submissive terms, and his whole principality, which contained several millions of inhabitants, was incorporated with the empire. The northern Han princes, supported by the Tatars, maintained themselves bravely against the imperial troops; whilst the southern Han

state lost its independence. The emperor now ventured to attack the prince of Keang-nan, and subjugated this province to his sway ; but shed tears on account of the great effusion of blood, which these continual wars rendered necessary. The Tatars in Leaou-tung, now began to tremble for their own safety, and when the emperor a second time invaded the northern Han state, they sent no auxiliaries. The country was thus, after an obstinate resistance, and bloody war, conquered, but Kaou-tsoo did not see the end of this war ; he died in 976, regretted by all his subjects, whom he loved like a father. He was severe towards the mandarins, but spared the people, for whom he kept open the four gates of his palace, saying : “ This, my house, shall be like my heart,—open to all my subjects.”

Tae-tsung, his son, succeeded him upon the throne. Indignant at seeing the Tatars in possession of Leaou-tung, he resolved to expel them by force ; but he could not conquer these brave people, who, in their turn, invaded China. But the imperial army surprised the Tatars, by taking bundles of straw in their hand, and kindling it during the night, whilst they marched towards the camp ; which threw them in such consternation, that the whole army fled without offering the least resistance. But this victory produced no decided result ; and the emperor was, in the

end, compelled to conclude a peace. He died, after having waged a great many wars, in 997.

His successor Chin-tsung, agreed to pay the Tatars a considerable tribute, in order to induce them to abstain from their incursions. This act brought great blame upon him, for his generals asserted, that he might have driven them to their ancient abodes, and taken from them all the cities, which they had conquered from the Chinese. The province of Sze-chuen, which had before revolted, again broke out into open rebellion. Wang-keung, was chosen chief by the rebels, and he declared himself independent. They at first vanquished the Chinese, but were afterwards totally routed and dispersed. A second campaign against the Tatars, in which the emperor himself headed the army, was not so successful. The emperor was thrown into a state of melancholy, when he reflected what disgrace the empire had suffered by these barbarians, and at the same time saw the impossibility of conquering them. Happening to see in a dream a spirit who addressed him, he, next morning, when he gave audience, and all the mandarins had assembled, recounted his dream, at the same time a book was produced, wrapped in yellow silk, corresponding to the vision. The emperor opened it, and there found the destiny of the Sung dynasty, with

some moral instructions. He so fully believed the story, that it had fallen from Heaven, that he honoured and preserved it as the best relic he could have obtained. Thus he went on dreaming, until he rendered himself ridiculous. He made a census of all the families, who paid tribute, in 1014, and found the number to be 9,955,729.

Though he himself was a weak-minded prince, he had some very able ministers, the most celebrated amongst whom was Wang-tan, who spoke little and did much. He alleviated the burdens of the people, and showed himself very able in the choice of mandarins; but the eunuchs again gained the ascendancy at court, while the emperor occupied himself with trifles. Another book now fell from Heaven, which he likewise received as a celestial gift, sent on purpose to instruct him. The grandees openly remonstrated against this folly, but the emperor was averse to listen to their censure. He collected a great number of Bonzes and Taou-sze, to whom he gave a public audience, to the great scandal of the literati, who thought themselves the only persons, who should enjoy such privileges. He died in 1022, and the two celestial books, which had effected so much mischief, were buried with him.

Jing-tsung, a youth, was his successor, and the

empress governed the empire during his minority. When he had come to age, he showed no great inclination to revenge the wrongs of his country done by the Tatars ; and a threatened invasion, made him willing to pay an annual tribute of 200,000 taëls, besides a great quantity of silk-piece goods, to indemnify them for the loss of some cities, which Tae-tsoo had taken from them.

As he had no children, his nephew, Ying-tsung, was his successor, 1063. The empress assumed a share in the government, which might have given rise to many serious quarrels, if the prime-minister had not interfered, and by his salutary advice restored harmony. Learning flourished under his successor, Shin-tsung, but there were no original writers, and China was deluged with commentators, who, wiser than their ancestors, explained away the few passages, which referred to a Divine Being. Materialism now became the fashionable philosophy, and whilst the literati sacrificed to the idols, they believed that there was no God. The emperor intended to humble the Tatars, but preferred peace to war. Che-tsung died after a short reign, having done nothing worthy to be recorded in history: his mother, in fact may be said to have reigned in his stead, A. D. 1100.

His successor, Hwuy-tsung, was a great patron of the eunuchs, on whom he not only con-

ferred offices, but whole principalities ; and these audacious courtiers, presuming more and more upon the bounty of this weak prince, became a scourge to the empire. To expel the Tatars from Leaou-tsung, the emperor took the Neu-che Tatars into his service, who performed the task effectually, but took possession of this country for themselves, and as they saw the weakness of the Chinese empire, invaded the Pechele and Shen-se provinces. The emperor himself was anxious to meet them, in order to assign them the limits of their conquest, but the treaty was broke, and the Tatars took Shan-se. Thus straitened, the emperor hastened towards the Tatar camp to conclude a peace, and was taken prisoner, in 1125.

His son, Prin-tsung, immediately put the six ministers to death, who had betrayed his father into the hands of the barbarians ; but he could neither repel their forces, or oblige them to liberate his father. On the contrary, they conquered the province of Honan, without meeting with any resistance. Marching towards the capital, they took it, and entered the palace ; the whole imperial family fell into their hands ; one only of the empresses escaping captivity by a stratagem. Many of the nobles committed suicide, to escape the hands of these barbarians, who pillaged the city, and committed

great excesses. The Tatars, imitating the Chinese, adopted the name of Kin for their reign.

Kaou-tsung, his brother, who came to the throne after him, in 1127, transferred his court to Hang-choo, the capital of Che-keang; and gained some advantage over the Tatars, but very soon lost it. It was his wish to gain the good will of the Tatars by adulations, and he employed the word Chin, "Servant," used by officers when addressing their sovereign, to designate himself. But all these concessions could not satisfy the Tatars, who though they gave up the dead bodies of the imperial prisoners, yielded not an inch of ground; and it was only the Yang-tsze-keang, which put bounds to their encroachments. Their king ordered them to cross it on horseback; but they refused to obey, for fear of being carried into the sea; but as the commander insisted upon it, he was slain, and the army dispersed.

Under Heaou-tsung, 1162, lived the celebrated commentator, Choo-he, who wrote upon all the classics. His remarks render the text very intelligible; he indeed did so much, that all others after him, who undertook the same work, have only perverted the classics by their false glosses. Kwang-tsung, 1189, reigned in peace: his successor, Ning-tsung, invoked the help of the Mongol Tatars, to drive the Kin out of

China, 1194. These new guests very soon conquered the Kin, but instead of giving the conquest to its rightful owner, they kept it for themselves, and thus laid the foundation of the celebrated Yuen dynasty. They were then led by the invincible Genghis, who never met with an enemy whom he did not put to flight. But whilst these great princes swayed the Tatar hordes, and conquered one province after the other, China had a weak and worthless prince in Le-tsung, who was occupied with the dreams of the Taou sect, whilst his whole empire went to ruins, 1225. The ravages which the Tatars made were horrible, and the blood of the peaceful citizens flowed in streams. The Kin resisted for a considerable time the terrible attacks of the Mongols; but were finally compelled to give way. This involved the poor Chinese in constant troubles, for both the conquerors and the vanquished plundered the country.

Under Too-tsung, 1266, many of the Chinese grandees sided with the Tatars, for the emperor was a vicious and worthless prince, and the Tatars were governed by the celebrated Kublai Khan. Too-tsung was plunged in pleasure, whilst the Mongols took from him one city after the other. All his armies were repulsed with great loss, and no Chinese general ever gained a decisive victory. Kublai was tempted by the

king of Korea, to attack Japan, which might have saved the empire ; but he soon resolved to turn all his strength upon China, and thus the ruin of the Sung dynasty was decreed.

Three youths survived their unworthy father, Too-tsung, to witness the destruction of the empire. The second of them assumed the purple, under the name of Kung-tsung, 1224. Kublai published a proclamation, in which he enumerated the reasons which actuated him in subduing China. "Peace, which was offered by my ancestors," he said, "was rejected. I myself wished to remain quiet, and sent an ambassador, who was detained at the Chinese court, against the law of nations, and now I declare war." He immediately ordered his two generals to cross the frontiers. In vain did the empress-dowager, who governed during the minority of her son, implore mercy, the victorious Tatar general Peyen did not stop in his march ; the young emperor was taken captive, and sent into the desert of Shamo : Peyen entered the capital, Hang-choo. The efforts to rescue the young emperor out of the hands of the Mongols, proved unsuccessful ; and he had to submit to his lot. The Mongols now sent also a fleet into the sea, which took possession of Canton, 1277. The young emperor, Twan-tsung had taken refuge on board of his own fleet, to save his life,

which was everywhere in jeopardy: the vessel on board of which he was, foundered, and he was with difficulty saved. He died on the island of Kang-choo, aged eleven years. The imperial fleet was at the Yae island at anchor, and Te-ping, the young emperor, was on board. His army on shore had suffered repeated defeats, and the soldiers were all scattered. The Mongol fleet sailed in search of them, and the admiral proposed to them to surrender, which the Chinese minister haughtily refused. He, therefore, made a general attack upon the Chinese, which lasted a whole day, and ended in their entire defeat. Loo-sew-foo endeavoured to escape with the young emperor, but he could not get out of the straits. He first threw his wife and children overboard, and then addressing the young prince, he said, "It is better to die free, than to dishonour one's ancestors by an ignominious captivity." So saying, without waiting for a reply, he took the prince and jumped into the sea. Thus ended the Sung dynasty. The empress, and many of the grandees followed his example. The imperial fleet was driven about, and scattered by the storm; the admiral plunged into the sea, and all resistance against the victorious Mongols ceased, 1279.*

* See *Histoire Générale*, vols. vii., viii., and ix., and the Wang-keen-e-che.

MONGOL OR YUEN DYNASTY.

FROM 1279 TO 1368, A. D.

We now behold a race of foreigners seated on the throne of China. Before we detail their history, let us trace their origin, and describe the exploits of their countrymen, who did not enter China, but carried their victorious arms towards the west.

The plateau of central Asia has, in all ages, poured forth swarms of wild barbarians, who reduced the inhabitants of the vanquished countries to the level of their own rudeness. Accustomed to live in deserts, with immense pastures before them, they envied civilized nations their cities and villages; and what savage fury and fire could not destroy, the hoofs of their horses trod down. We can form no idea of the prolific Tatar tribes; though myriads of their countrymen might migrate to foreign lands, eager for conquest, though millions might amalgamate with the vast Chinese nation, so that even their name was no more known, others appeared as if by magic, and overflowed the surrounding countries, like an irresistible torrent. All their in-

testine wars could not thin these numberless swarms ; the steppes of Asia, though barren in the vegetation of plants, furnished the world with innumerable destroyers of the human race.

We have occasionally mentioned the Mongols or Moguls, as a numerous, warlike, tribe. Scarcely had the Huns evacuated their abodes, when the Turks began to expand, and were afterwards followed by the Mongols. Abstaining from all anterior research, we commence with that famous person who led his nation to glory and conquest.

Temugin, — Genghis-khan, — lost his father when he was still very young. The former had reigned over thirteen Tatar hordes, but these warlike tribes spurned the idea of being governed by a child. The youth fought a battle against his rebellious subjects, but was obliged to fly. Amidst a few fugitives he found kindred souls, who pledged themselves to divide the sweets and bitters of life. Temugin shared among them his horses and apparel, they sealed their covenant by sacrificing a horse and tasting of a running stream ; and from this moment we see in Genghis, though still an unbearded youth, an invincible conqueror. Proving at length victorious over the rebels, who had refused to ac-

knowledge his sway, to give a warning to others, he cast the leaders into a boiling cauldron. He then conquered one of the Christian Tatar princes, who refused obedience to his laws ; and, to inspire terror, he drank, at his public banquets, out of the skull of Prester-John.

As if aware of the decrees of fate,—of the great distinction, for which he had been singled out and endowed by an Almighty power, he pretended to have been born of an immaculate virgin. “From heaven,” he said, “I have received the title of Genghis, I have a divine right to the conquest and dominion of the earth.” Seated upon a felt, he was proclaimed, by a general diet, khan of the Mongols and Tatars.

To give stability to his new empire, he created new laws ; adultery, murder, perjury, theft of a horse or ox, were punished with death. The whole Mongol nation was pronounced a nation of free men, lords who were entitled to spend their lives in hunting, waging war, and idleness ; all drudgery and labour being left to the slaves and women. Their troops were armed with bows, spears, scimetars, and knives ; they were divided into hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands. Woe to the coward who left his ranks : vanquish or die, this was the martial law. They had then no alphabet, no learning,

their traditions supplied the deficiency, though they adopted afterwards the Kufic or Syrian character. Though this had, very probably, been taught them by the Christians, the fact was not generally known ; and accordingly they formed their characters in imitation of the Christian writings. Possessing little religion, they were very superstitious in their usages, though they do not appear to have been bigoted idolaters.

The valour of Genghis was at first directed against surrounding savage tribes, who were very soon subdued. The vassal of China carried his arms into the heart of the celestial empire, and humbled the insolent Chinese ; and at one time, conceived the plan of converting the whole of the northern provinces into one vast pasturage, like his own steppes. The inhabitants, who had surrendered at discretion, were ordered to evacuate their houses and to assemble in a vast plain, where all those who could bear arms were either instantly massacred, or enlisted into the Mongol army. The fine women, and artificers, in short, all useful persons, were divided amongst his soldiers, in equal lots, who carried on a regular trade in human beings, and demanded a high ransom from those who could pay it. Poor helpless wretches, who were a

burden to the conquerors, were sent back to their native country, and condemned to pay a heavy tribute to their savage victors. If they were irritated by the vanquished foe, they levelled their habitations with the ground, and boasted that a horse might ride, without stumbling, over the place where a city once stood. With relentless cruelty they extirpated whole races, and gloried in their feats of inhuman valour.

Genghis encountered in the west the sultan of Kharizmia, in whose veins Turkish blood flowed. After having satiated himself with blood, he wished to establish a friendly intercourse with the Mohammedan princes; but unhappily these Turkish rulers knew not how to value the proffered friendship. A caravan of three ambassadors, and 150 merchants, was arrested and murdered by the sultan. Genghis, before he chastised his enemy, fasted and prayed for three days and three nights on a mountain; appealing to the judgment of God and of his sword. An army of 700,000 Mongols met half the number of Mohammedans, in the plains to the north of the Jihon or Iaxartes. The sultan was astonished at the fierce Mongolian valour, and trusted to his fortresses to prevent their invasion, and effect their expulsion. But

they were grossly mistaken ; one city after the other surrendered, and the work of destruction was carried on methodically. From the Caspian sea to the Indus, the Mongols ruined within four years, more than four centuries of continual labour have yet restored. Genghis himself encouraged the fury of his troops ; to take revenge and exercise justice, he destroyed the peaceful habitations of many millions, who had never offended him. The most flourishing cities became a heap of ruins. Samarkand, Bokhara, Nizabour, Balkh, and Kandahar shared in the same destruction. He followed the vanquished Mohammedans to the Indus, where the valour of the remaining sultan was acknowledged even by Genghis himself. His army pining away, however, under a vertical sun, and loaded with spoil, forced their leader to return home. In his retreat he saw the ruins of the cities, which had been swept away by the tempest of his victories, and promised to rebuild them. He now met with one of his generals whom he had dispatched to subdue the western provinces of Persia ; and who had trampled upon the now vanquished nations, and carried destruction to all the tribes around the Caspian sea. Having reduced the rebellious Tatars, he departed this life stained with blood ; and, with

his last dying breath, exhorted his sons to attempt the conquest of China.

Five hundred wives and concubines composed the harem of Genghis. His four sons, illustrious for talent and their high extraction, had occupied the highest offices of state. Tushi was his great huntsman, Zagatai his judge, Octai his minister, and Tuli his general. They had been educated in the camp, beheld their father's victories, and had themselves conquered. They proclaimed Octai, great khan. He was succeeded by his son Gaiyuk, after whose death the empire devolved to his cousins, Mangou and Kublai, the sons of Tuli, the grandsons of Genghis.

The conquest of Persia was effected by Holagu-khan, the brother and lieutenant of the emperors Kublai and Mangou. At the Caucasus he extirpated the race of the Assassins, or Ismaelians, whose principal occupation consisted in slaughtering or assassinating their fellow-creatures. When the victor approached Bagdad, the residence of an effeminate khalif, Holagu was met by an insolent messenger, who announced to the invincible Mongol that the throne of the sons of Abbas, being founded upon a divine decree, their foes should surely be destroyed in this world and in the next.

“Who is this Holagu,” exclaimed the khalif, “who dares to rise against me? If he be desirous of peace, let him instantly depart from this sacred territory, and perhaps he may obtain from our clemency the pardon of his fault.” This false security had taken possession of the khalif, who constantly lived in his harem, because his vizir assured him that, if the barbarians dared to enter the holy city, children and women would be able to overwhelm them with stones. Bagdad was taken, after a siege of two months: Holagu sacked the city, and killed the last khaliph, Mostassem. Anxious to give succour to the Christians, against his implacable foes, the Mohammedans, he took his way towards Palestine; and all the cities in the route surrendered to the victor. Anatolia and Armenia fell into his power; and there remained scarcely a shadow of the once powerful Seljukian race, 1272.

After the conquest of the northern parts of China, Octai sent his nephew, Batou, into the West. They passed on horseback, or in leather boats, the Wolga, Kama, Don, and Borysthenes, the Vistula, and the Danube. The civil discord which reigned in Russia, betrayed the country to the Tatars; who spreading from Livonia to the Black Sea, reduced the capitals to ashes, and penetrated into Poland and Germany.

In Silesia, the Germans and Poles made a stand, a bloody battle was fought, and the savage Mongols had the satisfaction of filling nine sacks with the right-ears of the slain. With more savage fury, they spread themselves over Hungaria: in one summer they accomplished the work of destruction so totally, that scarcely any city remained. But their wild, destructive cruelty raised against them a great many enemies. The emperor of Germany besought all German and European princes to hasten to his assistance: it was a common danger, which all ought to repel, to avoid being themselves involved in destruction. The Mongols were just on the point of penetrating into southern Germany, when a large German force advanced; upon which they thought proper to withdraw, laying waste Servia, Bosnia, and Bulgaria, in their retreat.

Whilst Batou was engaged in Europe, his brother, Sheibani-khan, penetrated into the frozen region of Siberia, and conquered there a country which nobody contested. The pope, indignant that these monsters ravaged so many countries, sent an embassy of some monks to Batou, who had orders to convert the khan. But the savage answered, that he was invested with divine power, to extirpate the nations; and threatened the pope to involve him in the same

destruction, unless he visited him in person as a suppliant. Their court was held in Asia, at the village of Karakorum, where the ambassadors of the different vanquished nations approached as humble slaves, who looked up for existence to these cruel masters. Batou died on his march to attack Constantinople. Borga, his brother, carried the victorious Tatar arms into Bulgaria and Thrace, where Michael Palæologus was surrounded, in a castle, by 20,000 Tatars. Their general, Noga, raised a formidable rebellion against Mongo-Timour; and married a daughter of the Grecian emperor, whom he faithfully served. The Turkish empire, in Asia, was almost dissolved; but very soon recovered, and began to flourish more than ever under the Ottomans.

Timour, or Tamerlane, who, as some assert, was descended from the noble family of Genghis; but, according to others, the son of a common peasant, was born in 1361, near Samarkand, at a time when anarchy filled the unwieldy Mongol empire. His life was full of dangers. The Kalmucks had invaded his native country; his courage was called forth by his suffering countrymen; but he was betrayed in the hour of danger, obliged to flee with a few horsemen, and finally thrown into a dungeon. From hence he escaped by his undaunted valour; but was for a

very long time a vagrant in the desert. Having become a brother-in-law to the Emir Houssein, he gradually acquired power; Houssein was killed; and Timour reigned alone over Zagatai. Though the Mongols, at their first outset, had been declared enemies of the Mohammedans, those who lived in Persia and Turkestan had gradually become proselytes to Islamism; and Timour himself was a staunch Moslem. When he had firmly seated himself upon the throne of Zagatai, he turned his attention towards Persia, which was still under the government of a descendant of Holagu. He conquered the country, and punished those who resisted his arms. The Christians of Georgia long withstood his attacks; but Timour waged against them a holy, extirpating war; they fell into his hands; and the crescent was planted where the cross had stood. But he was not always victorious. By his power, Toctamish, a fugitive prince of Turkestan, of the Mongol race, had been reinstated in the empire of Mongolia, which then comprised a part of Russia. However, this ungrateful prince undertook, with an immense army, to drive his benefactor, Timour, from the throne. He approached Samarkand, where Timour was constrained to fight for his life and crown; but he very soon rallied his forces, drove the enemy from his territory, and vanquished

him in a pitched, bloody battle. He wreaked his vengeance upon the peaceful inhabitants of Russia, and destroyed Astrakan, Serai, and Azov, then a rich emporium of Venetian merchants. When he had terminated this conquest, he turned his attention towards Hindoostan. His soldiers murmured, on account of the dangers they would have to encounter in trackless deserts, and under a vertical sun ; but Timour laughed at their fears, and commanded them to march forward. It proved, however, to be a toilsome undertaking ; but he arrived at Delhi, and the blood of the Hindoos flowed in torrents. Having satisfied his pious zeal upon the infidels, he left the conquered country to his generals, and hastened to western Asia. The remainder of the Christians, in Georgia, were in open rebellion ; and defended themselves, in their mountains, like free men ; but the valour of the Mongols was irresistible, and they had finally to choose between the abjuration of their faith and death. Many became martyrs, and did honour to their profession.

Timour was now the neighbour of the haughty Ottoman, Bajazet. He wrote him an insulting letter, which concluded with the following words : “ Thou art no more than a pismire : why wilt thou endeavour to provoke the elephants ? Alas ! they will trample thee under their feet.” Ba-

jazet was indignant at such insulting language, and retorted. Timour's first expedition against his undaunted rival took place in 1400 ; but he only took one place on the frontiers, where he buried alive 4000 Armenians, who obstinately defended it. Seeing that Bajazet was engaged in the blockade of Constantinople, he was too pious a Musulman not to respect his holy occupation. He, therefore, invaded Syria, took several cities, routed the Mamalooks, and declared that, in all his wars, he had never been the aggressor, his enemies having always been the authors of their own calamity. Whilst the streets of Aleppo streamed with blood, and re-echoed with the cries of helpless babes, who were slaughtered with relentless cruelty, the insolent conqueror talked of peace. Two years had now elapsed, and the sultan, Bajazet, had been preserved from ruin. After this period, there was nothing more to hope for him. But he had collected an immense force, which met the invincible Mongols in the plains of Angora. The victory was obstinately contested ; but the Turkish forces could no longer withstand the wild valour of the conqueror ; they were totally defeated, and Bajazet himself taken prisoner. Broussa and Nice submitted to the victor ; Smyrna, defended by the valorous knights of Rhodes, was taken by storm, all that breathed was put

to the sword, and the heads of the Christian heroes were launched from the engines on board of two European ships in the harbour. Bajazet, according to the most credible writers, being kept in an iron cage, and led about in triumph, died of a broken heart. Soliman, his son, guarded, with the Byzantine emperor, the Bosphorus, to prevent the landing of these destroyers of mankind on the opposite shore. To soothe the vengeful conqueror, they paid a heavy tribute, and acknowledged themselves vassals.

Timour, though now in an advanced age, was still meditating how to conquer the world. To subject northern Africa and all western Europe to his sway, was now the grand object of his desires. He marched with an army towards Egypt; but repented of his undertaking. Having shed so much Moslem blood, he wished to expiate his guilt by the death of millions of pagans. His mind was shocked at the idea, that the Chinese had driven the house of Genghis from the throne, and he was desirous of revenging the injury done to his relations. His generals received orders to subdue the pagan Kalmucks and Mongols, whilst he marched slowly to Samarkand, his capital, where he celebrated the splendid nuptials of his grandchildren, and gave himself entirely over to pleasure; but this lasted only a very short time.

The standard for the invasion of the farthest East was unfurled, to propagate the law of the prophet being the principal object of this expedition. China was to renounce idolatry and adore Allah, the temples of idols were to be razed to the ground, and the priests to be murdered. Neither age, nor the severity of the weather could retard the march of Timour; and an innumerable host was on their way to the celestial empire, when the conqueror was cut off suddenly by an Almighty hand. He died of a fever, his designs were lost, his armies disbanded, and China saved from inevitable destruction. He left thirty-six sons and grandsons, but none who equalled their father. The Mongol empire was divided and lost; a fragment was upheld by his youngest son Sharokh, but after his death the whole fell again into a state of anarchy. Before a century had elapsed, Transoxiana and Persia were laid waste by the Uzbek Tatars; his descendant in the fifth degree had to flee to Hindoostan, where he founded the celebrated empire of the Great Mogul. Though at first very large and powerful, it was gradually annihilated, and the imperial city of Delhi plundered. There exists still a shadow of an emperor without power and influence, and a humble pensioner of the Honourable East India Company. Whether any of his descendants, or those of Genghis,

are still the chiefs of hordes in Mongolia, we have not been able to ascertain; but no longer famous for their valour, they are now the simple slaves of their Mantchoo masters. In Europe, where their name is either forgotten or held in execration, there exists not a vestige of their former empire. Though the Grand Mogul is a mere shadow, the numerous posterity of the conquerors, proves the extent of the Mongol conquests in India. In Persia also are many traces left; in Turkestan the conquerors mixed with the natives, and lost their nationality. Though the southern Mongols adopted the religion of the vanquished, the inhabitants of the steppes became humble votaries of Shamanism, which they received from Tibet. History does not exactly inform us, whether the Mongols penetrated into this mountainous country or not; but it is very likely, that Tibet did not escape their thirst after rapine. After so many emigrations and bloody wars, it is extraordinary that the Mongols should still be the most numerous tribe of the Tatars. Their Siberian empire has fallen to the lot of the Russians. In vain would they try at the present period to extend their conquest to the west, they would meet with a formidable enemy, who might annihilate them, before they even had passed the frontiers of the desert. But China is still open

to their inroads ; what resistance could the emperor give to these wild hordes, if they all at once poured upon his empire ? But we hope this may never take place ; but rather, that the Chinese may so improve in arts and sciences, as to oppose an effectual barrier to their invasion.

The conquerors of China showed a better policy in regard to their new subjects. Though torrents of blood had flowed, and whole provinces been laid waste, Che-yuen—Houpilai—or She-tsoo, the name given to him in the ancestral hall, was too great a politician to wield the sword longer than it was absolutely necessary. This celebrated emperor, better known under the name of Kublai-Khan, granted peace and happiness to his subjects, as soon as he was firmly seated upon the throne. We should not so well understand the character of this prince, if Marco Polo, who was intimately acquainted with him, had not given us a full description. “Kublai-Khan,” he says, “is the lineal and legitimate descendant of Genghis, and the rightful sovereign of the Tatars. He is the sixth khan, and began his reign in the year 1256, (he ante-dates, Chinese historians begin to count his reign from 1280, when he was in possession of the whole empire,) being then twenty-seven years of age. He obtained the

sovereignty by his consummate valour, his virtues and his prudence, in opposition to the designs of his brothers, supported by many of the great officers and members of his own family. Previously to his ascending the throne, he had served as a volunteer in the army, and endeavoured to take a share in every enterprise. Not only was he brave and daring in action, but in point of judgment and military skill, he was considered to be the most able and successful commander that ever led the Tatars to battle. From that period, however, he ceased to take the field in person, and entrusted the conduct of expeditions to his sons and captains, excepting in one instance, the occasion of which was as follows :—A certain chief, named Nayan, who, although only thirty years of age, was uncle to Kublai, had succeeded to the dominion of many cities and provinces, which enabled him to bring into the field an army of 400,000 horse. His predecessors, however, had been vassals of the grand khan. Actuated by youthful vanity, upon finding himself at the head of so great a force, he formed in the year 1286, the design of throwing off his allegiance and usurping the sovereignty. With this view, he privately dispatched messengers to Kaidu, another powerful chief, whose territories lay towards the greater Turkey (Turkestan), and

who, although a nephew of the grand khan, was in rebellion against him. As soon as Kublai had received notice of this, he collected 360,000 horse, and 100,000 foot, consisting of those individuals, who were usually about his person, and principally his falconers and domestic servants, (he must have had a great many). But this was not his whole army; many thousand Mongols were scattered throughout the provinces, not only maintained from the pay they received from the imperial treasury, but also from the cattle and their milk. Kublai reached within twenty-five days the camp of his enemy; he called his astrologers to ascertain, by virtue of their art, and to declare in presence of their whole army, to which side victory would incline. They ascended the hill with alacrity, which separated them from their enemy, who was negligently posted. In front of each battalion of horse were placed 500 infantry, armed with short lances and swords, who, whenever the cavalry made a show of flight, were practised to mount behind their riders, and accompany them, alighting again when they returned to the charge, and killing with their lances the horses of the enemy. As soon as the battle was arranged, an infinite number of wind instruments of various kinds were sounded, and those were succeeded by songs, according

to the custom of the Tatars, before they engage in fight. The order for fighting was given, a bloody conflict began ; a cloud of arrows poured down on every side, and then the hostile parties engaged in close combat, with lances, swords, and maces shod with iron. Nayan's forces were devoted to their master, and rather chose to meet death than to turn their back upon the enemy. Nayan was made prisoner, and shaken between two carpets, until the spirit had departed from him ; the motive for this peculiar sentence being, that the sun and the air should not witness the shedding of the blood of one, who belonged to the imperial family. The troops which survived, swore allegiance to Kublai. After this signal victory, he returned to Kambalu.

“ There are twelve inspectors of the army. A centurion receives a tablet of silver, a chiliarch a tablet of gold, with this inscription :—‘ By the power and might of the great God, and through the grace which he vouchsafes to our empire, be the name of the khan blessed ! and let all such as disobey, suffer death and be utterly destroyed.’ He who has the command of 100,000 men has the same large tablet, only heavier, and engraved with a lion. Whenever he rides in public, an umbrella is carried over his head, denoting the rank and authority he

holds ; and when he is seated, it is always upon a silver chair. They can also make use of the imperial stud at their pleasure.

“Kublai, who is styled the Grand Khan, or Lord of Lords, is of the middle stature ; his limbs are well formed, his complexion fair, and occasionally suffused with red. His eyes are black, and handsome ; his nose is well shaped, and prominent. He has four wives of the first rank, who are esteemed legitimate, and the eldest-born son of any one of these succeeds to the empire upon the decease of his father. They bear equally the title of empress ; none of them have fewer than three hundred female attendants, who, with the ladies of the bed-chamber, pages, and eunuchs, constitute the ten thousand inmates of the harem, independent of the numerous concubines in Ungut. His palace is the greatest which the world has ever known. The sides of the great halls and the apartments are ornamented with dragons in carved work, and gilt figures of warriors, of birds, and of beasts ; with representations of battles. The inside of the roof is so contrived, that nothing besides gilding and paintings present themselves to the eye. In the rear of the body of the palace there are large buildings, containing several apartments, where is deposited the private property of the monarch. Here in this

retired situation, he dispatches business with convenience. Near the wall of the palace there is an artificial mount; it is clothed with the most beautiful evergreen trees; for whenever his majesty receives information of a handsome tree growing in any place, he causes it to be dug up, with all its roots and the earth about them; and however large and heavy it may be, he causes it to be transported, by means of elephants, to this mount, and adds it to the verdant collection. There is also a stream at the foot of this green mountain, an aqueduct and fish-pond.

“The city of Kambalu, Yen-king, is situated near a large river, in the province Katai; however, the great khan removed the court to Taidoo (Ta-too, great capital, the present Peking). This new city is built perfectly square, and about twenty-four miles in circumference. The whole interior of the city is disposed in squares, so as to resemble a chess-board, planned out with a degree of beauty and precision impossible to describe. Every gate, of which there are twelve, is guarded by a thousand men; for the great khan is very suspicious about the Kaitaians (Chinese). In the centre of the city, there is a great bell suspended in a lofty building, which sounds every night; and after the third stroke no person dares to be found in the

streets, unless upon urgent business. Within each suburb, there are at intervals, as far perhaps as a mile from the city, many hotels or caravanserais, in which the merchants arriving from various parts take up their abode. This shows, that during the Mongol dynasty, a trade with foreign countries, by means of caravans, was carried on to a considerable extent.

“The great khan had a minion called Achmai; a Saracen, who had so entirely taken possession of the imperial favour, that he freely disposed of government offices, and pronounced judgment upon all offenders. He had also obtained great wealth; for every person who desired an appointment, found it necessary to make him a considerable present. The grand khan, having no confidence in the Chinese, bestowed all the provincial governments upon Tatars, Saracens, Christians, and other foreigners. In consequence of this, his government was universally hated by the natives, who found themselves treated as slaves by these Tatars, and still worse by the Saracens. Two Chinese chiefs, therefore, Chin-koo and Wan-koo, determined to revenge the injury done to them by Achmai, and swore to put all to death who wore beards. They accordingly enticed Achmai to the palace, and severed his head from the body. But the conspiracy was early discovered by the

Tatar guard, who dispatched Wan-koo, and took Chin-koo prisoner. The great khan hastened to the capital, and after due investigation, inflicted capital punishment upon the offenders. As he was informed that Achmai was the author of all this wrong, he disinterred his body, and threw it into the street to be torn in pieces by the dogs. The sons, who had followed the steps of their father in his iniquities, he caused to be flayed alive. Reflecting upon the principles of the sect of the Saracens, who would even have pronounced the nefarious Achmai innocent, he forbade them to continue many practices enjoined by their law, and held them in contempt and abomination.

“Upon the anniversary of his birth-day, the grand khan appears in a superb dress of cloth of gold, and on the same occasion, full twenty thousand nobles and officers are clad by him in dresses similar to his own, in point of colour and form, but the materials are not equally rich. On this occasion, all his Tatar subjects, and likewise the people of every country throughout his dominions send him valuable presents, according to the established usage. All the Christians, idolaters, and Saracens, likewise offer up devout prayers to their respective gods, that he may bless and preserve the sovereign, and bestow upon him long life and prosperity. At the new

year, before the tables are all spread, all the princes, the nobility of various ranks, the cavaliers, astrologers, physicians, and falconers, together with the officers of the army, made their entry into the great hall of the emperor, before whom, the rich tribute sent by the provinces on this occasion, has passed in review upon camels. When all have been disposed in the places appointed for them, a person of high dignity, as we should express it, a prelate, rises and says with a loud voice : ‘ Bow down, and do reverence ;’ when instantly all bend their bodies until their forehead touches the floor. Again the prelate cries : ‘ God bless our lord, and long preserve him in the enjoyment of felicity.’ To which the people answer : ‘ God grant it.’ Once more the prelate says : ‘ May God increase the grandeur and prosperity of the empire ; may he preserve all those who are his subjects in the blessings of peace and contentment, and in all their lands may abundance prevail.’ The prelate then burns incense in honour of the grand khan, on an altar erected on purpose, the gifts are presented, a banquet ensues, which is concluded by theatrical performances.”

This immense court of the grand khan,—for his body guard alone amounted to 12,000, and his hunters to several thousands,—stood in need of a great influx of commodities, in order to

maintain itself. On that account the trade of Kambalu and Tae-doo, was immense. No fewer than a thousand carriages and pack-horses, loaded with raw silk, made their daily entry, and gold tissues and silks were manufactured to an immense extent. But the merchants resided in the suburbs, which were fully as large as the city itself, and had a great many handsome buildings. In this city of Kambalu is also the mint of the great khan, who may truly be said to possess the art of an alchemist, as he has the art of producing money from black paper, made of the bark of the mulberry-tree, upon which the mark of himself and his grandees is stamped, in order to make it current; but then, it has an equal value with gold and silver coin. Upon these grounds, it may certainly be affirmed, that the grand khan has a more extensive command of treasure than any other sovereign in the world. Twenty-four nobles of the first rank, are in charge of the civil and war departments of the empire. There are posts established throughout the empire, that the grand khan may know what is going on in all his provinces. When dearth or mortality of the cattle takes place in any of the provinces, the grand khan afforded immediate relief to the sufferers; he provided also for the needy at the capital, who were very numerous. He main-

tained, likewise, at his expense, about five thousand Christian, Saracen, and Chinese astrologers, truly a considerable number. According to the account of Marco Polo, the religion of the Tatars seems to have been Buddhism, but it was at that time not yet tinged with that bigotry, which has made absolute slaves of their posterity. Their style of conversation was courteous; they saluted each other politely, with expressions of satisfaction, had an air of good breeding, and ate their victuals with particular cleanliness. To their parents they showed the utmost reverence, and punished undutiful children very severely. Whether this applies with equal force to the Tatars, or only to the Chinese, we cannot determine. But if to the former, their manners must have undergone an extraordinary change within a very few years. The present Grand Khan has prohibited every species of gambling, and other modes of cheating, to which the people of the country were addicted, more than any others upon earth; and as an argument for deterring them from the practice, he says: "I subdued you by the power of my sword, and consequently, whatever you possess belongs of right to me. If you gamble, therefore, you are sporting with my property." He does not, however, take any thing arbitrarily in virtue of this right. The greatest decorum is preserved in

the presence of the sovereign. Speaking of the great canal, he remarks: This magnificent work is deserving of admiration, not so much from the manner in which it is conducted through the country, and its vast extent, as from its utility and the benefit it produces to those cities, which lie in its course. On its banks, likewise, are constructed strong and wide causeways, upon which the travelling by land also is rendered perfectly convenient. This stupendous work was commenced and accomplished by a barbarian—the immortal Kublai. He must have been a very great man, who from a state of barbarism and savage habits, could be so entirely transformed, as to be one of the most enlightened princes of his age. Though Marco Polo only views him in a favourable light, it must be admitted, that his remarks are very just, and fully applicable to the grand monarch, whom he so accurately describes.

When Kublai had vanquished the Sung family, he called one of the most faithful ministers of the fallen dynasty, and addressed him by saying: “If you will transfer to me that service, which you performed to Sung, I will forthwith make you a minister of state.” Teëntsung, this was his name, replied: “I was the minister of Sung, how can I serve masters of different names. I desire that death may be

conferred upon me; that will satisfy all my wishes." The emperor, however, hesitated, whilst the courtiers advised to comply with his arrogant request. An order was accordingly given to carry him to the market-place, and there put him to death. When about to suffer, he said with great composure to the executioner: "My work is finished." In his girdle were found sentences of Confucius and Mang-tsze, with his own reflections upon them. When his corpse was received by his wife, its countenance exhibited the same appearance that it possessed when animated by the soul of her departed husband. The sentences were: "Let the body perish, provided filial piety is brought to perfection"—and "The loss of life is a trifle, when it is lost in the support of justice."

To confer glory upon his ancestry, he created them, to the third generation, emperors of China, and had accordingly placed the tablets in the halls of the ancestors. But notwithstanding his strenuous endeavour to render himself popular with the Chinese, they always remained disaffected towards his government. Though he might confer upon them the greatest benefits, they could not forget that a barbarian prince ruled over the celestial empire. There are some writers who bestow great praise upon his paternal government, but the majority seize upon

every error he committed to render his memory odious.

Thirst for conquest was his leading passion. Though he was in possession of the whole Chinese empire, he could not suffer the adjacent island of Japan to remain free. The Chinese fleet departed for its conquest. A similar spectacle had never been witnessed, even in the glorious times of Yaou and Shun. Four thousand vessels, according to the accounts of the Japanese, put to sea, to subdue a free country. The most excellent Mongol warriors, and the king of Korea led forth an innumerable army. But they were dispersed near the Piscadores—Pong-hoo islands; many of these frail barks were wrecked, and the officers returned with the remainder, leaving the soldiers to their fate, on these barren islands. The Mongols, however, were not so easily to be daunted; they constructed new barks, in order to effect a descent upon Japan. But the Japanese, hearing of the great preparation, which threatened their existence, massacred the whole, with the exception of 12,000 soldiers, whom they made slaves. Scarcely three persons escaped to China, to announce the dreadful news. Other histories represent the event differently, but all agree that the Mongol army was annihilated by the Japanese.

Notwithstanding the mutinous spirit which reigned in China, Kublai relinquished not the hope of conquering Japan. He had again pressed a great number of soldiers and sailors; and was fitting out a second expedition, when pirates began to disturb the maritime provinces. This obliged Kublai to employ his forces against them; but the remonstrances of the grandees were so strong, that he finally yielded to their entreaties to abstain from such a dangerous undertaking. But his mind was full of schemes; he had to employ the unruly Mongols, to prevent them from rebelling against him; therefore, after many reverses, he fought successfully against, and subjected to his sceptre the Birmah country. The Cochin-Chinese, and the Siamese annals, relate, that his generals penetrated even as far as their own country. Though naturally a conqueror, he forgot not to encourage the arts of civilized life; without which, no empire can have duration. He had other astronomical instruments made; for those of the Sung were very imperfect. What must the work of their predecessors have been? He suppressed the Taou sect, and burnt their books as a punishment for their seducing the people. But he was, on the other hand, very partial to the votaries of Buddhism and the followers of the Lama. Their temples he endowed with rich gifts, and spread

their books, which taught the absurdities of Shamanism. In this he showed his great weakness ; and, if he had not been so much occupied with his campaign, and the administration of government, he would have given himself entirely over to their stupid fables. But he was, at the same time, a most tolerant prince ; who never persecuted any of his subjects for having a different religion from his own ; and might have served as a shining example to many Christian princes, and to his holiness, at Rome, himself.

God had given him an excellent wife ; and it is remarkable, that almost all great men have had a counsellor in their spouses. She frequently directed his steps, and interceded for the poor wretches who had fallen under the lash of his vengeance. He loved her most affectionately, and spent many days in consultation with her. She died, after having reached an advanced age, deeply regretted by the emperor, who could never replace her. It is very apparent, that her conversation and example very much tended to transform a savage into a civilized man ; and that the softness of female character can even reform a barbarian. What would China, what would Tatar, be, if ladies enjoyed a station in life which constituted them the partners and faithful companions of their husbands ? But

for this, we sigh in vain, until Christianity exercises its sway over these barbarous countries.

Kublai's loss was enhanced by the death of his son, the heir of the crown. This promising youth, who died suddenly, to the great dismay of the whole country, would have surpassed, or, at least, equalled his father, by the wisdom he showed at an early age, if he had not died too soon.

Notwithstanding the bloody wars which Kublai waged, he found sufficient time to relieve the wants of his subjects, who were dear to his paternal and political heart. In the year 1290, a terrible earthquake occurred in the neighbourhood of Shang-too, in which more than ten myriads of people perished under the ruins of the houses. The emperor inquired into the causes which had influenced Heaven to inflict this dreadful calamity; no one dared to answer this question; for the prime minister, a minion of the emperor, had sent his creatures thither to fatten upon the sweat of the poor wretches, and to force from them their last subsistence; so that many committed suicide for fear of starving, and others became fugitives in the mountains. However, a descendant of the Sung dynasty pleaded their cause; and all taxes were remitted by the humane emperor, to the great annoyance of the prime minister. Heavy rains, which inundated

the country, again rendered the territory desolate. San-ko, the prime minister, finally removed, after having oppressed the poor, who went about without any shelter against the inclemency of the weather, was most severely punished, and with him, all his creatures, whether innocent or guilty. The emperor immediately relieved the wants of his suffering subjects; and, big with new projects of subjecting to himself all the islands of the Indian Archipelago, which had been, in the meanwhile, explored by Marco Polo, he sent thither his ambassador, demanding entire submission from the rajah of Java. This prince, offended at such a proposition, imprinted the mark of a thief upon the face of the ambassador, and sent him back with the utmost disdain, 1292. Indignant at the insolence of a petty barbarian chieftain, Kublai sent a large army to Java; but, after having exhausted his strength in the conquest of a neighbouring kingdom, in which the Javanese were his allies, he was surprised by a sudden attack of his false friends, lost a great many of his soldiers, and was thus forced to retreat to China, without having effected any settlement, or retained any conquest.

Notwithstanding the magnificence with which his court was kept, he frequently showed a great deal of parsimony. His subjects had

been grievously oppressed by the collectors of duties. To free the nation from this plague, he dismissed 669 mandarins, and confiscated the great riches they had amassed. In the same year, a Mohammedan, offering to sell him certain pearls at an enormous price, he returned them, saying "These jewels only serve to corrupt the heart of man, by nourishing his pride and vanity. Is it not better to bestow the money they cost, in order to relieve the wants of the people?" Even so far did he go, as to hasten to the assistance of his subjects when a celestial phenomenon solely had indicated the wrath of Heaven.

Notwithstanding his wise policy, he was not able to extinguish entirely the mutinous spirit of his countrymen, who gave him incessant trouble; and he had to march repeatedly into their country to subdue them by force of arms. At this he was highly indignant; and this circumstance tended to accelerate his death, 1294.

The empire of China was never so extensive as during his reign; his authority being acknowledged from the Frozen Sea, almost to the Straits of Malacca. With the exception of Hindoostan, Arabia, and the westernmost parts of Asia, all the Mongol princes, as far as the Dnieper, declared themselves his vassals, and brought regularly their tribute. Never was an

empire, and never was there, perhaps, a conqueror, greater than Kublai.

Born a barbarian, he was, at his death, the most civilized prince of his time. Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon, are inferior to him. Wherever his empire extended, the introduction of a benevolent government was the natural consequence. He did not wish to reign solely over the body of his subjects, but he understood how to controul spirits—the greatest of all arts. We are not blind to his faults; he was an insatiable conqueror, and spilt the blood of millions for the sake of gratifying his passion. We consider him as an instrument, used by the Lord of Hosts, to bring the most distant nations in contact, and to curb the fury of his savage countrymen. The canals, in China, speak more in praise of his greatness, than all the statues erected in honour of great heroes: but with him the glory of the Mongol dynasty departed. His grandson, Timur-khan, whose ancestral name was Ching-tsung, Kwo-haou, Yuen-ching, or Ta-tih, was still in Tatory, when the news of the death of the aged monarch arrived. Three months elapsed in idle consultations and altercations, who, among all the sons of the great Kublai, was to be his august successor; for though the deceased emperor had appointed him his heir, the other princes, anxious to seize upon

the crown, refused him his hereditary right; and they would have had recourse to arms, if a celebrated Mongol general, Pe-yen, had not constrained the imperial princes, with a sword in his hand, to proclaim him emperor. The wise Timur-khan, published immediately after his accession, a general amnesty.

The country had been greatly afflicted by a drought, the people suffered intensely; and to remedy the evil, the young emperor distributed grain, and endeavoured to extirpate the robbers, who had become very numerous. They even dared to lay siege to the imperial cities. On one occasion they killed the commander of Chang-choo, and the chieftain proposed to his relict to marry her. She agreed, but first asked permission to burn her husband's corpse. When the pile was lighted, she jumped into the fire, and died in the arms of her lord! Such conjugal fidelity is highly extolled by the Chinese writers, and the emperor himself, struck with a love stronger than death, erected a monument in honour of the faithful wife, and ordered incense to be burnt before their tomb.

Timur-khan treated the king of Ava, who came to render the customary homage at Peking, very leniently. However, the rebellious Mongol chiefs were severely punished, and

Timur did not show any partiality for the princes of his own blood.

The rites due to the worship of Heaven had not yet been well defined. Timur-khan regulated the ritual with very great care, and sacrificed oxen, sheep, stags, and pigs. It is remarkable, that all mankind have been anxious to appease the wrath of Heaven by blood. How this agrees with the pre-conceived ideas of the Mongols, in favour of Shamanism, which strictly prohibits the killing of animals, on any account, we are unable to determine. But Timur-khan was no bigot; he taxed the Buddhist priests as well as those of Taou, and put them on a level with the common people.

This amiable prince, whose talents were not shining, died in 1307, without leaving behind him any legitimate offspring. The empress, being a very intriguing woman, was anxious to govern the empire during the minority of one of the illegitimate princes, but she was foiled in her endeavours; for Hae-shan, one of the princes, of Mongol blood, marched with an army to Shang-too, where he was proclaimed emperor. His Mongol name is Hae-chan-khan, his ancestral Woo-tsung. He was very much addicted to women and wine, but received the admonitions of his ministers with great meekness. He so much honoured the Lamas, that

he showed them every kind of respect, and even did not punish a proud priest for having insulted an imperial princess. No great qualities rendered him conspicuous, but he cherished tenderness towards his subjects, whom he assisted with paternal care, in a time of general scarcity, occasioned by inundation. Toula, a Mongol prince, was beheaded by him, because he had not shown due respect towards his sovereign. When he fell sick, which ended in his death, 1311, he forgave all persons who had offended him; and entrusted his brother, Ai-yulip Ali-pata, with the care of government. His ancestral name was Jin-tsung, Kwo-haow, Hwang-king, or Yen-yeu.

His predecessors had greatly honoured Confucius, but this emperor conferred still greater honours upon the sage. Several of the works of this philosopher were translated into the Mongol language, and edicts issued commanding the perusal of them. But this would have been very little to the purpose, if he had not also conferred titles upon those, who were well versed in the Confucian doctrines; introduced examinations, established schools and colleges, and greatly honoured the literati. The administration underwent a thorough change; all persons inadequate to the rank they held, were dismissed from their offices. Hitherto

foreigners had been entrusted with the most important appointments ; but Jin-tsung, created an equal number of Chinese and Mongol mandarins ; which gave very great satisfaction to the natives, who had gradually become accustomed to a foreign yoke. In the exercise of justice he did not even spare his favourites, who, if they were convicted of crimes, had to suffer the severest punishments. His great watchfulness over the welfare of the nation, could not entirely prevent the ravages of robbers, who still infested the country. A great deal of the oppression, which caused people to betake themselves to plunder, was the work of the Mohammedan mandarins. Some robbers had invaded a village, and found an old woman ; just when they were about to dispatch her with a dagger, her son threw himself over his old mother to receive the blow. The robbers were so struck with this proof of filial piety, that they spared them both, and even gave them victuals and water. When the emperor heard of this, he had a triumphal arch erected in honour of the son, who could even sacrifice his life for his parent. Jin-tsung, died in 1320, after a happy reign. His son, Chootepala, was his successor ; his ancestral name is Ying-tsung, Kwo-haou, Che-che.

Tee-mou-tien, one of the grandees and prime

minister, who had leagued with the empress dowager, created great disturbances in the empire. This caused the young emperor to treat him with very great severity, so that he died of a broken heart: but a tenfold death could not have expiated the crimes of this monster.

This young prince, who raised the greatest hopes of a happy reign, was assassinated in his tent, 1323, by some vagabonds, who had entered into a conspiracy. He had no children. The heir to the crown was Ye-sun-temur.

At his accession to the throne, he wished to treat the murderers of his predecessor with great clemency. But one of his faithful ministers upbraided the prince, and pointed out the dangerous consequences which would arise from it. Struck with these observations, and fearing that he might be considered an accomplice in the murder, he sentenced the criminals to death.

The imperial palace had for a considerable time been filled with an immense number of lazy priests, astrologers, eunuchs, &c.; and this host of worthless beings drained the imperial treasure. The ministers in vain besought the sovereign to rid the country of these drones; he was inexorable. At the same time a host of Lamas traversed the country, living upon the sweat of the poor. Their pride and arrogance was boundless. Like grasshoppers, or mendi-

cant friars, they inundated every district, and were sure to carry off the riches of the country. A memorial was accordingly addressed to the emperor, that he would prohibit their entrance into China, for they came from Tibet. He hesitated for a long while, but found himself finally constrained to accord their petition. He was otherwise a lazy prince, but a good general. He died in 1328. It was to be expected, that great troubles would break out after his death, respecting the succession to the throne; but this evil was averted by Too-temur, his second son, who, although he had been proclaimed emperor, conferred the diadem upon his elder brother, as the rightful heir. His name was Houchila. At first he distrusted the sincerity of his brother, but when he saw that he was in earnest, he treated him with very great respect. The same evening he entered triumphantly the capital, gave a great supper to the princes and grandees; but suddenly he fell down and died. Some ascribe this to poison, 1329. He was succeeded by his generous brother Too-temur. To show the great respect he cherished for the Lamas, he created the high-priest his tutor and counsellor, and forced all the literati of the court to render him great honour. This caused a great deal of dissatisfaction; but he was so besotted by this superstition, that he even made a

temple of his own palace. To record the great acts of his family, he required the Hanlins to compose a work upon the costumes of the Mongol dynasty, and ordered the historians to investigate the annals. The whole government was given to Yen-temur, a prince of royal extraction, who tyrannized over the nation, whilst the emperor only lived for his pleasures. This embittered the minds of the people, several rebellions broke out, but Too-temur did not live to see the direful consequences of his misrule. He died in 1332.

Hin-che-pan, the son of Ho-chila, was a boy of seven years, when he was promoted to the throne, under the regency of the empress dowager, a very clever woman; but he died very soon, and the government of the empire devolved now upon To-hwan-temur, 1333. He was a weak, worthless prince, and only thirteen years of age when he became emperor. Pe-yen, his prime minister, who hated the empress dowager, for being an intriguing woman, had her executed publicly. The crimes of Yen-temur ran to a height without parallel in history. To establish his authority upon a firmer basis, he married the widow of an emperor, and took for his concubines the imperial princesses. It was under his unhappy reign, that one rebellion after the other disturbed the peace of the country.

Far from giving himself the trouble of repressing them, the emperor lived an indolent life; his time was spent in frivolous pleasures, the nation groaned, and became refractory. During the year 1342, the famine which afflicted the empire was so great, that the people ate human flesh. Seldom did the imperial generals prove victorious; but this was the case in Che-keang, where the capital Hang-choo was retaken, and the rebel army almost annihilated. But the whole empire was in a state of fermentation; the flame of rebellion spread throughout all the provinces, and the throne began to shake. Signs in the heavens, earthquakes, droughts, &c. foreboded the fall of the Mongol dynasty. The coast was ravaged by pirates, who are said to have had 10,000 vessels under their command. They also infested the rivers, and put an entire stop to the trade. The emperor, meanwhile, lived with the Lamas and his concubines, and was even ignorant of the misery his subjects suffered. He had prohibited to the Chinese the use of horses and arms; the rebels only laughed at this injunction, and the whole country was a scene of anarchy. Tato, an experienced Mongol general, was dismissed from the service; and from this moment the ruin of the Mongol dynasty was sealed. The proclamation of a new emperor belonging to the Sung family,

threw the whole court into consternation; but he was a mere freebooter, and his reign was only ephemeral. Instead of choosing experienced statesmen to repress the anarchy, Shun-te entrusted the administration of the empire to two eunuchs. When the Mongol chiefs observed, that Shun-te was unworthy of the throne, they rallied their forces, and fought independently. Polo-temur, one of them, entered victoriously into the capital, and purged the whole court of all the sycophants. He even went so far as to expel the Lamas, a race of vagabonds; and had the audacity to prohibit the exercise of their religion. But he very soon changed into a tiger, and rendered himself odious to the whole court. The empress, whom he had imprisoned, again gained his favour, and joining with several desperate characters, she had him executed, and sent his head to the heir of the crown, against whom Polo-temur had waged war. But the court was not freed from intrigues by the assassination of Polo-temur; new quarrels divided the strength of the enfeebled empire. When the emperor saw that the Ming dynasty had conquered the whole empire, he fled to Ying-chang-foo, where he died in 1370.

The Mongol princes, who sat upon the throne of China, deserve credit for having governed

the country so well. Even the most bigoted Chinese will allow, that they were by no means behind the Sung family. They accommodated themselves to the prejudices of their subjects, improved upon their arts and sciences, and promoted peace and tranquillity.

MODERN HISTORY.

A. D. 1368 TO 1833.

CHAPTER XVI.

MING DYNASTY.

FROM 1368 TO 1644, A. D.

CHINA had not long worn a foreign yoke. The dissatisfaction of the whole nation at being ruled by barbarians, whom they viewed with the utmost contempt, was so great, that, at the first opportunity which offered, their insolent, and now effeminate conquerors, were driven from the throne and expelled from China.

The founder of this dynasty was the son of a poor labourer; his name was Choo-yuen-chang. Nothing extraordinary in his exterior marked the future hero and deliverer of his country. He was born at Sze-choo, in Këang-nan. Being of a very weak constitution, and unfit for work, he was sent to the priests at the Hwang-këö-sze temple. When twenty-four years of age, he was dissatisfied with their listless and

vicious mode of life. His country was then in a state of general fermentation, and he enlisted in the army. Here he very soon signalized himself by acts of valour, and was thus brought to the notice of the commanding general, who promoted him. Having strengthened his influence by marriage with a great lady, the future empress, Choo considered himself powerful enough to become the leader of a party. The enmity against the Mongols was then at its highest pitch; thousands of malcontents flocked to his standard; and as he maintained good discipline amongst his soldiers, he was very soon beloved by the inhabitants. His first exploits were aimed at the possession of the Che-këang province, where within a short time he established his authority; but before he could extend his victories, he had to meet the chief of another party, Chin-yew-lëang. A most obstinate battle was accordingly fought, near the Po-yang lake; myriads were engaged in this combat, which ended in the entire defeat of Chin-yew-lëang. Choo-yuen-chang not only routed his enemy, but extirpated his party; and with a promptness which always marks a great warrior, he took possession of the provinces Hoo-kwang and Keang-se, where he was hailed as their deliverer by innumerable multitudes, who had groaned under the iron yoke of the Tatars.

The weak Mongol government having neglected the administration of justice, numerous bands of robbers infested the country, and to legalize their lawless proceedings, declared themselves patriots, who came to revenge their countrymen upon the barbarians, their oppressors. As soon as Choo's army grew powerful, he suppressed these banditti, and gave tranquillity to the territories he had conquered. But amidst the turmoil of victories, he did not forget his poor parentage. He went purposely to the grave of his father, where he prostrated himself, and bathed the ground with tears. Then addressing his officers who were present, he reminded them that he had been a common soldier,—it was by his talent and bravery that he rose,—his wise management of affairs had put a stop to pillage,—thanks to Heaven, which had raised him from the dust, and entrusted to him the high office of being the deliverer of the people. But he did not spend his time entirely in pious ejaculations. Though advised by one of his generals to relax in his exertions—for it was now as easy to take the empire as to unroll a mat, which unfolds of itself,—still, having called before him his principal generals, who were all his townsmen, and had served with him as common soldiers, he dispatched them to the provinces of Fuh-kéen,

Kwang-tung, and Kwang-se, and took upon himself the conquest of the north. His minions advised him to adopt the title of emperor, which he indignantly refused, and contented himself with the simple title of Prince of Woo. His modesty gained him all hearts. He had finally taken possession of the maritime districts of Che-keang, and had established himself in Këang-nan; his next expedition was directed towards Shan-tung, from whence he hoped to invade Ho-nan. Shan-tung was conquered by one of his generals, and the whole army was now on their march to the northern provinces. The soldiers were drawn up, the emperor held a final review of the regiments, and, to his great astonishment, observed the *imperial* standard waving. He was much enraged at this presumption, and sharply rebuked his general for having been too rash, in forcing upon his sovereign a dignity which only the azure heavens could bestow. The standard was furled; he marched at the head of his innumerable army, anxious to encounter the Mongolian forces. By this time he had received news of the conquest of Kwang-tung and Kwang-se; all these happy events inspired his soldiers with courage, and they marched forth as victors. Having driven the Mongol emperor, Tohwan-temur, from the capital, Yen-king, he solemnly declared himself emperor.

Anxious to maintain the authority of his sovereign in the western provinces of the empire, Kookoo-temur, one of the Mongol princes, had stationed his army at Tae-yuen, where he was surprised by the Chinese whilst reading in his tent, and had scarcely time enough to throw himself upon a horse, and ride off at full gallop. His whole army was routed; the soldiers threw down their arms, or went over to the Chinese emperor. A detachment of cavalry followed the fugitive Kookoo-temur to Kansuh.

Hung-woo, for this was the name of the new emperor, entered the palace, abolished luxury, superintended every department of the administration, and provided for the helpless beings, who had become orphans and widows by this war. Such measures rendered him very popular, and thus we are not astonished, that Shen-se and Shan-se provinces, so well garrisoned by the Mongols, were very soon subdued by the Chinese arms. But as long as the Mongol emperor lived, Hung-woo did not consider himself firmly seated upon the throne. He therefore sent an expedition beyond the Great Wall, in order to surprise the Mongol camp; and the Chinese general, successful in his campaign, took the whole of the imperial family prisoners. Ngai-yew-chilipata, the son of the deceased Mongol emperor (for he had lately died) effected his

escape ; but Maitilipala, his grandson, was brought before Hung-woo ; his officers desired the emperor to murder the young prince in the hall of his ancestors. But the humane Hung-woo was horror-struck with this proposal, and greatly blamed the man, who had dared to give him such advice. He even uttered lamentations at the fall of the Mongol dynasty, and ascribed this disaster to the depravity of its princes, who had degraded their station by vice. Seldom, if ever, was so extensive an empire as China subdued within so short a time. Few princes have equalled Hung-woo in the measures he took to consolidate the empire, and to lay the foundation of a long reign. He had continually the illustrious names of Yaou and Shun in his mouth, and declared, that it was his sole desire to imitate their virtues. Not forgetting that he was originally a man of low estate, he referred to the founder of the celebrated Han dynasty, who had likewise been a plebeian. It was not till after the entire conquest of China, that Leaou-tung was subdued, with much effusion of blood. This territory had been a stronghold of the Tatars, who defended it to the last. The imperial generals showed no mercy to the commanders of the Mongol forces, whom they viewed as rebels. Many Mongols committed suicide, when they were at the point of despair ; others were deca-

pitated by the Chinese, and this once brave race, who conquered the greater part of the old world, were crouching before the effeminate Chinese, earnestly suing for life. So much had circumstances changed—it was the hand of God, who had raised and now humbled this fierce race. Though the Mongols had entirely abandoned the hope of ever regaining possession of China, they could not patiently brook their defeat, and in order to revenge themselves in some small degree, made repeated incursions into the empire. These were generally attended with heavy losses, but they rather chose to sacrifice their lives, than not to enjoy the satisfaction of having retaliated upon the peaceful peasant, the injuries inflicted upon them by the soldiery.

When the empire was tranquillized, and Yunnan also subdued, the king of Korea (Chaou-seen, or Kaou-le), sent his ambassador to congratulate his imperial majesty upon the success which had attended his arms, 1383. This kingdom had, during the reign of the Chow and Han dynasties, constituted a part of the Yen state, and Han-woo-tee had made it a place of exile for criminals. A warlike tribe, the Kaoule had, during the Tsin dynasty, made themselves masters of the country, and were afterwards kept in a nominal dependence by China. It was also under this reign, that an amicable in-

tercourse between the Loo-choo islands and China was established. The king of these islands had sent his brothers and sons to the Chinese court, in order to be educated; a custom which is still continued, the grandees of these islands constantly repairing to Peking, in order to acquire the Chinese language and manners.

Hung-woo owed much of his success to the wise counsels of his wife, the empress Ma-she, a very prudent and amiable woman, who guided his steps, and was one of the greatest ornaments of her sex. But she died long before her husband, who had afterwards to experience the loss of the heir to the crown, his eldest son. Yet he bore those afflictions with patience, and was solely occupied with the good administration of the empire. He discarded the priests of the Taou sect, who came to present him with a treatise upon magic; and despised their elixir of immortality, which had deceived so many emperors. Under his vigorous government, the frequent attacks of the Tatars were successfully repulsed. Several Mongol tribes subjected themselves willingly to the Chinese government, and became thus a rampart against the frequent invasions from the west. Hung-woo concluded his glorious reign in 1398, after having nominated his grandson his successor, who as-

cended the throne under the name of Keën-wăn-te.

The founder of the Ming dynasty was doubtless a very great man, his forbearance being as remarkable as his valour, and he was as great a statesman as a warrior. Whilst he stifled every germ of rebellion, and always kept a large army in the field, he was most anxious to spare the lives of his subjects, and of the Tatars. The many instances of brutal cruelty, which happened at the surrender of cities, and at the punishment of rebels, must rather be ascribed to his generals, than to his orders. Nothing proves so well his amiable character, as the princely splendour with which he maintained at court the grandson of the Mongol emperor, whom he had driven from the throne. When he proposed to this prince to leave China for Mongolia, the youth chose rather to remain with his generous enemy, than to return to his native country. There is only one measure, which reflects no credit upon his policy : his great fondness for his children prevailed over his prudence as an emperor ; he bestowed principalities upon his sons, and thus sowed the germs of discord in the empire. The name he received in the temple of ancestors, was Tae-tsoo,—grand sire.

When the prudent Hung-woo felt his end approaching, he sent all the princes from the

court, to their principalities, until his grandson was fairly established upon the throne. He supposed himself to have done enough for China, by making a new code of laws, and enjoining the hereditary princes, that they ought not to extend their sway beyond the limits of their patrimony. He flattered himself, that, by abridging the time of mourning for parents, from 27 months to 27 days, the real grief for the loss of the parents would be more sincerely exhibited. Having been himself a priest, he was thoroughly acquainted with their institutions, and therefore knew the consequences of granting too much liberty to an unmarried priesthood. He therefore issued orders, that neither men nor women should enter the monastery, before the age of forty years. Being well versed in ancient history, he knew what power the eunuchs had arrogated to themselves, and therefore made a law, that no eunuch should ever be permitted to hold any office in the state, how small soever. To render filial piety illustrious, and to set up a glorious example to conjugal fidelity, he erected a monument to a son, who offered himself to a band of robbers, to be killed instead of his father,—and to the wife of the same dutiful son, who, on the point of being violated by these robbers, jumped into the fire where they were roasting her husband, and died in his

arms. A father had offered his son to an idol, on account of a vow he had made, for the recovery of his mother. On hearing this account the emperor was shocked, and disapproved of a filial piety, which made such horrible sacrifices necessary. Had he reigned longer, China would not again have been inundated with blood.

As soon as the young emperor had taken the reins of government in his hand, he remitted the taxes which fell very heavy upon the people, and were necessary for the maintenance of a large standing army.

His being declared emperor gave general dissatisfaction to his uncles, who believed themselves to have a better claim to the empire, than a youth of 16 years. To prevent a formidable coalition amongst them, against himself, the young prince degraded the princes of Min, Sëang, Tse, and Tae, to the rank of plebeians, and took from them their territory, under very slight pretences. Choo-pe, prince of Seang, could not bear the loss of his dignity; he set fire to his palace, and threw himself into the flames, not to outlive his departed glory.

The prince of Yen, aware of the danger which threatened him, made preparations to repel force by force. Two mandarins who had been sent to his court, by the emperor, to watch over

his actions, had to suffer death as spies. Not waiting for the attack of the imperial forces, who would very soon have come to punish his audacity, he gathered an army, defeated the imperial general, took several cities by assault, and even threatened the capital. But the way thither had to be opened by many bloody engagements, in which the prince of Yen fought with great valour. He addressed his grievances to the emperor, stating, that he only insisted upon the punishment of those ministers who had been the cause of the degradation of his brothers, who, he demanded imperatively, should be instantly reinstated in their principalities, and thus the old order of things re-established. But, under the cloak of these just demands, he concealed ambitious designs. The emperor rejected these propositions, and sent repeatedly his generals against the victorious uncle. But they were beaten, or went over to the enemy. An army sent to Shan-tung, for the defence of this province was beaten, and the imperial general taken prisoner. Startled at these bad news, the emperor advised with his ministers upon the measures to be adopted. An army of 100,000 men was collected in Leaou-tung, for the defence of the capital. Yang-yuen was entrusted with the command; he approached the army of Yen, and the last hope of the

court was annihilated by a decisive battle, 1403. The emperor, in this dilemma, proposed to divide, with his uncle, the empire. "I am come here," this was the reply of the prince of Yen, "to restore the sons of the emperors into their patrimony, and then to retire to my principality." But, at the same time, his troops passed the Hwae-ho, took possession of Yang-choo, and approached within thirty leagues of Nanking.

The consternation of the court was general. The great question was what was to be done in this emergency. The majority of the council advised to punish Le-king-lung, the cause of all this misery, with the most ignominious death. All the inhabitants were ordered to prepare themselves for a vigorous defence of the capital, even the imperial family did not scruple to take up arms, but this measure only occasioned the utmost confusion. Before the emperor had even completed his defence, the victorious army was already at the gates. A deputation was therefore sent out to the conqueror in order to sue for mercy. They went out of the city gates and met the prince of Yen. There they lay prostrate before him, bowing to the earth, and muttering some words about the partition of the empire. The victor sternly answered: "Deliver the enemies of my family to me, and I shall return to my capital." The time was

lost by useless consultations, whilst a traitor opened the gates of the capital. The victorious army entered, and the perfidious ministers betook themselves to an ignominious flight, leaving the helpless emperor to consult with a Han-lin doctor, about the propriety of taking the habit of a priest, and entering a monastery. However, the empress fearing that every thing was lost, threw herself into the flames, and perished with heroic courage, whilst the emperor skulked about in his disguise, having shaved his head and retired, with a few faithful adherents, to a monastery. As soon as the prince of Yen had entered the capital, and received the congratulations of the mandarins, he vowed vengeance against the traitors who had degraded his family. "Whosoever," this was his proclamation, "betrays the chiefs of the conspiracy, shall be recompensed with the second rank of a mandarin." This remuneration, joined to the thirst after gain, called forth a great many false accusers, eager after the property of their enemies, and prompted by a desire of avenging private injury. The whole city was filled with the blood of the innocent, and several mandarins, to put an end to these unjust prosecutions, accused themselves of having been abettors of the degradation of the imperial uncles. Taou-hëen, a priest in favour with the prince of Yen, interceded in behalf of Tang-hëaou-joo, a learn-

ed doctor, who had not been accessory to the crimes of the ministers. The prince of Yen summoned him to his presence, and proposed to make him his private councillor; but the doctor declined the honour, and insisted that the son of Këen-wan-te ought to be the successor to the throne, for it was generally believed, that the emperor had perished in the conflagration of the palace. Irritated at such a proposal, the prince of Yen threatened to execute his whole family to the ninth degree of consanguinity. The scholar answered, with great indifference, "This cruel act will bring upon your name eternal infamy." Such an answer offended the victor, and he ordered the mouth of the obstinate doctor to be torn asunder to the ears, and threw him into prison. A number of literati went to the dungeon, to visit their beloved master; the prince, offended at the interest they took in the dire fate of the culprit, executed him in the prison, and threw his corpse on the highway. About 1000 persons suffered death with him; but this severe punishment could not prevent the literati from burying the doctor in the most splendid style. Other faithful servants were cut to pieces, and all the women in the palace had to suffer a cruel death. But when the bones of the burned empress were shown to the prince of Yen, who mistook them for the remains of Këen-wan-

te, he wept, pretending to be affected by the tragic end of his relation. After so many cruelties, he published an entire amnesty, and had the name of Këen-wan-te erased from the historical annals, by dating from the death of Hung-woo, the reign of Yung-lo, which was the name that he adopted, as soon as he had declared himself emperor.

Yung-lo, though an usurper, was a man of talent. He removed the capital from Nanking to Pih-chih-le. Anxious to signalise himself against the Tatars, the inveterate enemies of China, he marched with a large army into the dreary wilderness of the extensive northern plain, and spread destruction on all sides. Some dispute, which had arisen in Cochin-China, called forth his interference. But he managed matters so well, that Cochin-China and Tunkin were reduced to Chinese provinces, notwithstanding the great aversion of the natives. His ambition was, however, not yet satisfied: he ventured upon another more fatiguing march into Tatory, where he made new conquests of waste regions, and erected a monument of his victories. After this, he returned home, and died, 1425. He was a prince of great capacities; and, whilst engaged in war, he patronized polite literature to a very great extent. Accordingly, he had a number of doctors ap-

pointed, who revised and commented upon the classics; a work which had been done by thousands before them. But Chinese genius was at a loss to invent, or rather apprehensive, lest they might wander from the path of the ne plus ultra doctrines of Confucius; they therefore chose rather to improve upon old established principles, than to rush into error by a new mode of thinking. The law against Buddhist priests was again renewed; but nothing was able to arrest the course of this idolatry. Keën-wan-te was still alive, a knight-errant amongst the Bonzes. Yung-lo was aware of this; but observing that he had no desire of seating himself again upon the throne, spared his life. Yung-lo died, after a reign of twenty-two years, and was succeeded by his son. He received the ancestral name, Ching-tsoo.

Jin-tsung's reign bespoke a happy issue. He promoted able mandarins to rank, provided for the necessities of the people, appointed mandarins to assist them in time of scarcity, and revoked those degradations which had blasted the memory of all those who were in the least concerned in the conspiracy of Keën-wan-te against his uncles. To lighten the burthen of governing so large an empire, he created an heir of the crown, who was entrusted with the government of the southern parts of China. However, he

did not live long enough. Seuen-tsung was his successor. The uncle of this prince, forgetful of the ties of blood, stood up in open revolt against his lawful emperor. This temerity found its recompense: the rebellion was very soon quelled, and the prince lost his possessions. Cochin-China was never at rest; and proved a great burden to China. A prince of Chin, who had been nominated king of Cochin-China by the emperor, claimed the right. But it was not so very easy to expel a rebel, who had taken possession of the country, and kept possession of the territory against all the edicts of the emperor. Seuen-tsung died in 1436. At his decease, the empress, a very clever woman, convoked the states; and, seated upon the throne, with Ying-tsung, her son, on her left, then a boy of eight years, had him proclaimed emperor. Anxious to shine as a regent of so great an empire, she examined herself all the branches of administration, and took the utmost care that the people should enjoy prosperity. There was an eunuch, who had educated the emperor from his youth: the child was much attached to him; and, confiding in the imperial favour, this vile man committed the greatest injustice. In a solemn assembly of all the ministers, the empress herself charged him with the most enormous crimes, and pronounced sentence

of death. The young emperor threw himself at the feet of his mother, and implored his pardon; he was joined by the ministers, who were anxious to ingratiate themselves with the emperor; and, restored to favour, this same minion ingratiated himself so much with the empress, that he became her favourite also. It was by his intrigues, that the three ministers of state, also called the three pillars, were dismissed from their office. As soon as the empress had died, 1443, it was pointed out to the young emperor that the founder of his illustrious house had engraven, upon brass, a law, which absolutely prohibited the eunuchs fulfilling any office of state. The young prince bore too great an affection to his early instructor; the eunuch continued in favour; and one of his first acts was to revenge himself upon the men who had dared to accuse him, who all were sentenced to undergo an ignominious death. One of the criminals had taken refuge in Ava. The emperor sent his forces to attack Mëen-tëen, (which is the name the Chinese bestow upon the Birman empire). The king, apprehensive of dangerous consequences, betrayed his guest; who, when in the hands of the Chinese, was sure that no mercy would be shown him, and killed himself. By this time, the Tatars of the north had advanced with a formidable army to attack China. All the

troops which could be spared, and the army which had been dispatched against the Birmanians, were sent to the steppes. Ye-sëen, the son of the celebrated Tatar chief, To-hwan, had requested an imperial princess in marriage. The favourite eunuch agreed to this match; but as he took umbrage about the number of horses and men, sent on this occasion, he disregarded his solemn promise, and dismissed the envoys and their tribute with the greatest disdain. Indignant at this insult, Ye-sëen swore to revenge himself. He approached the frontiers with a well-chosen army, and routed several small armies of the Chinese. Wang-chin, the eunuch, ordered immediately a levy of 500,000 soldiers to be made: with these he marched, in company with the young emperor, against the enemy. But he had badly provided them with provisions, and the army soon suffered from want. Several of the old experienced soldiers advised the eunuch to retreat, and not expose so many men to inevitable destruction; but the eunuch spurned the idea of retreating from a field where he intended to pluck immortal laurels. At first, Ye-sëen hesitated to attack so numerous an army; but having ascertained that the soldiers were almost starved, he made a furious assault, and, issuing orders to give no quarters, the Tatars slew 100,000 Chinese. The emperor

himself fell into their hands, and with great composure awaited death. His greatness of soul amidst dangers struck the Tatars with admiration: he was brought before Ye-sëen, whom several Tatar lords advised to kill the emperor instantly; because the Ming family had endeavoured to extirpate the Yuen, and it was only fair to retaliate. But Ye-sëen abhorred the idea of taking revenge upon an innocent prince, whose intrepidity he greatly admired. As soon as the captivity of the emperor was reported in the capital, the empress offered her jewels to redeem her husband. However, this ransom was rejected, as not being equal to the redemption of so illustrious a captive. The victor marched with him towards the frontier city, Tae-tung. The governor was on the ramparts; and the emperor called to him, saying: "Ko-ting, you are my ally; why must I stand here outside?" "It is by order of your majesty," he replied, "that I am charged to preserve this place for you." Though Ko-ting refused to surrender, he sent out warm clothing, and money to redeem the emperor, which, however, was not received.

To supply the place of the captive emperor, Ching-wang, under the name of King-te, ascended the throne, 1450. The imbecile eunuch was amongst the slain, and his whole party at

court had been exiled. Ye-sëen, with whom the captive emperor now stayed, was wearied with waiting for the ransom, and resolved to force the Chinese into terms. Having been disappointed in his attacks upon several frontier fortresses, he marched with a large army towards Peking; but before he had made any great progress he was met by ambassadors, to treat with him about the terms of the emperor's release. As they, however, could not agree, a large Chinese army advanced from Lëaou-tung and made a furious attack upon the Tatars. Ye-sëen's army suffered a total defeat, and had to retreat with all haste, in order to escape the avenging sword of the Chinese, who followed at his heels. Ye-sëen was now very willing to give up the precious charge; the commissioners arrived in the camp, and the preliminaries whereby the emperor was liberated, were signed. His restoration to the nation whom he loved gave general joy; the whole capital was full of rejoicings, and many myriads came to salute their beloved sovereign. Having been taught by misfortune to be humble, he resigned the throne, and left the imperial dignity of the empire to King-te, being content to live a life of obscurity. Before he had been taken prisoner, the palace was burnt by lightning; and repeated earthquakes had laid Ho-nan and

Shan-tung waste. A lively remembrance of this great calamity remained in his mind, so that he reascended the throne with great reluctance, in 1457. The grandees were indignant that King-te, a mere usurper, should maintain himself so long in a station which properly belonged to his brother; but this change was effected without bloodshed. The latter years of his reign were peaceful; he was a good, but not a talented prince. On his death, 1465, Choo-këen-shin, his son, succeeded, under the name of Hëen-tsung, a weak prince, and a fervent votary of Buddhism. In order to nip rebellion in the bud, he established a tribunal of eunuchs in the capital, who received orders to punish all unruly persons, even if no proofs could be adduced. This inquisitorial office became very soon a dread and terror to the whole capital, and to all the mandarins, who remonstrated in vain against the injustice of its proceedings; it was for some time suspended in its functions, but never entirely abolished. The reign of Hëen-tsung was peaceful; he was much attached to the Bonzes, but never persecuted the literati. After his death, which took place in 1487, the emperor Hëaou-tsung succeeded. His reign bore the name of Hung-che. His ancestors had published a geography of the empire; he compiled a new code of laws.

Though an empire so large as China furnished sufficient work to its ruler, the new emperor was more amused with the dreams of the Taou sect than with the affairs of government. To obtain the draught of immortality, was the grand object of all his researches ; but he endeavoured in vain to save himself from the common fate of all mortals. His ministers expostulated very severely with their master, but to no effect. There was something consoling in the idea of becoming, after death, one of the happy genii, which the Taou priests promised ; and as the doctrines of the Confucians were confined to this life, the emperor was very obstinate in refusing to renounce an error which cheered the last hours of mortal existence. After all his efforts to prolong his life, he died in the prime of manhood, in 1505, after a peaceful reign of eighteen years. Woo-tsung, his son, a youth of fifteen years, was his successor.

The inhabitants of Hami were, during the reign of Heën-tsung, very troublesome ; but they confined their rebellion to their own country, and did not insult the majesty of the celestial empire.

During his reign a census was taken. China contained at that time more than fifty-three millions of inhabitants.

Woo-tsung, or Ching-tih, gave himself up to

pleasure, and spent the greater part of his time in the company of the eunuchs. The country was afflicted with dearth, the nation in a most wretched state, and the unhappy Ching-tih was slumbering in the arms of pleasure. His ministers finally prevailed upon him to punish the arbitrary tribunal of eunuchs, but it was with great difficulty that they could be convicted of their crimes. Under such circumstances, it was not extraordinary that the whole empire should fall into a state of anarchy. Party spirit, as well as the wildest insubordination, accelerated the ruin of the country. Notwithstanding his imbecility, the grandees of the empire were faithful to their master. When the prince of Ning was about to usurp the imperial throne, a viceroy boldly told him that there could not be two suns in heaven, and that he himself could not serve two masters. This bold speech greatly startled the rebel, but he found a great number of grandees to join his standard. As soon as the imperial troops entered the field, the rebels trembled for the consequences. At Gan-king, the rebel head-quarters, the difficulty how to act was very great. They finally resolved to meet the imperial fleet of boats. The first onset was very fierce; the battle was obstinately contested; but finally the rebels gave way, and the surface of the Yang-tsze-

keang was strewed with their bodies. A general panic had seized them ; 30,000 soldiers were drowned, others slain, and the cowardly, rebel leader surrendered ; whilst all the females of his harem jumped into the water, to preserve their conjugal fidelity towards their lord.

The emperor died without issue, and a grandson of Hëen-tsung, a child, ascended the throne after him, under the name of She-tsung, 1521.

A tender mother had announced to him his accession to the throne. The prince was beloved by his subjects, and the hopes entertained of his glorious reign, were very lively. It was under his reign that the Mantchoo Tatars grew powerful, and made repeated inroads into China, which however were speedily repulsed. But he very soon disappointed the great hopes entertained of him. From his early youth he had cherished a predeliction for the doctrines of Buddha. Anxious to procure the liquor of immortality, he ransacked the empire in search of it. As all mortals undergo death, it is rather astonishing, that an emperor should be so credulous, as to suppose it possible to free himself from this common fate by taking medicine. To this he joined a strong fondness for poetry, which made him forget the most important affairs of state. In vain his ministers remon-

strated, the emperor was obstinate. Under his reign, Annan (Cochin-China) revolted, and maintained its independence against an overwhelming Chinese force. A Tatar chief, Yenta, conquered Shen-se, and laid it waste, 1542, and even threatened the capital. This awakened the emperor from his slumber; he began to tremble, but took no vigorous resources to repel these inveterate enemies. The Japanese perceiving that China was in a state of anarchy, effected repeated descents on the maritime provinces, acting as wild robbers, and carrying off a great many people. The same had taken place under Hung-woo. They had plundered the island of Tsung-ming, but upon application to the king of Japan, the prisoners were restored, and the ravages ceased. The king even went so far as to send tribute to the great ancestor of the Ming dynasty. He, on his side, sent the seal of office to the humble king who had declared himself a vassal of the celestial empire. But this subjection was only temporary, the Japanese broke forth under Yung-lo, and pillaged Korea. Yung-lo sent them an ambassador, ordering them to send every tenth year a tribute-bearer and ten hostages. The grandees treated such an offer with the utmost contempt, and would have killed the haughty ambassador. But the advantages of

the trade to China having been discovered, several grandees were desirous of participating in it, and went as ambassadors to Ning-po. Here they were treated with great contempt, which so irritated them, that they betook themselves to arms, in order to redress their wrongs. However, they were driven on board by the Chinese military, and several taken prisoners. China was closed against foreign intercourse. This prohibition gave rise to smuggling. But having been cheated in their commercial dealings, they began to make great ravages on the coast, and took possession of Chusan, and other islands. The whole coast from Namao up to Shan-tung, was visited by them with fire and sword, and every Chinese trembled at the name of this implacable enemy. During the whole time, the weak Këa-tsing was in search of the liquor of immortality, and neglected the administration of the empire. A minister, therefore, addressed a very pointed memorial to his sovereign, wherein he painted in strong language his misrule. The emperor read it, and indignant at such language, he threw the author into prison, but again reading the remonstrances, he repented of his conduct, liberated the minister, and began to make some amendments in his conduct. But he died very soon afterwards, in

1566, and left a record, wherein he accuses himself of neglect and misrule, and by this declaration, expiates his former misdeeds.

His third son ascended the throne after him; his ancestral title was Muh-tsung. His first care was to reform the abuses of government, and to satisfy the unruly Yenta, whom he created prince of the empire, and permitted to trade to the Chinese territory in horses, and to bring every third year tribute. After having addressed all his grandees in a most affectionate manner, he died in 1572. His son, when still a child, was his successor. His ancestral name was Shin-tsung. The unruly Tatar chief, Yenta, received a portion of ground in Shen-se, and from that time behaved very quietly. Wan-leih had a great esteem for his tutor, whose counsel he followed implicitly. He was his prime minister and friend, with whom he consulted upon every subject of importance.

The year 1592, was remarkable for the invasion of Korea by the Japanese. They effected a landing with a large army, the Koreans immediately fled with full speed. The king, who was a very worthless prince, escaped to Leaou-tung, and offered his whole country to the emperor of China. The Japanese entered triumphantly the capital of Korea, plundered the

palace and tombs, and took the royal family prisoners. They had subjected to their sway almost the whole peninsula ; and Taikosama, emperor of Japan, was upon the point of declaring himself king of Korea, when a large Chinese army opposed his progress. The cities, where they had fortified themselves, were taken by storm, and their large magazines destroyed. To cut off all communication with their native country, a Chinese fleet hovered on the frontiers of the coast of Japan and Korea. This measure greatly intimidated the Japanese, and rendered them very anxious to conclude a peace. They therefore sent an embassy, which was magnificently treated at Peking. But these stupid barbarians would not acknowledge themselves vassals of the celestial empire, and refused to pay tribute. The Chinese diplomatists, perceiving that all their endeavours to persuade them were in vain, insisted upon the evacuation of Korea and the conclusion of a lasting peace. The emperor, therefore, dispatched an envoy to the court of Japan ; he was a worthless person ; and after having been detained for about one year, he had to flee from the country. But another ambassador, with the insignia of royalty, sent by the Chinese emperor, shortly afterwards arrived. The emperor of Japan consumed the time with useless negociation, until he had col-

lected a numerous army, with which he made a descent upon Korea, 1597. They defeated the troops sent against them, whilst their army spread over the whole kingdom. The Japanese fleet ranged along the Chinese coast, and spread everywhere destruction, after having repeatedly defeated the Chinese fleet. But suddenly they evacuated Korea, and the Chinese general, who had been repeatedly routed, ascribed this extraordinary event to his own valour. Two persons, belonging to the royal family, who had been taken prisoners, were beheaded at Peking, because Taikosama, emperor of Japan, was declared a traitor, for not having acknowledged the supremacy of China, and therefore his family had to expiate his guilt.

In 1601, the celebrated Ricci arrived at court. The emperor consulted the tribunal of rites, what he had to do in regard to the presents, which were offered him by this European. "Europe," they answered, "is not connected with us, and does not acknowledge our laws. The images and tablets of the Lord of Heaven, and of a virgin, have no value. He presents a bag of bones, and tells us, that these are the bones of genii. We therefore judge that we ought not to receive the presents, or permit Ricci to stay at court." He remained notwithstanding, and promulgated popery.

The Mantchoo Tatars grew every year more powerful. They brought in a great many complaints about the injustice done to them in their trade, and as they received no redress, betook themselves to arms, and cut the Chinese army to pieces, 1618. They took several fortresses, and spread consternation amongst the Chinese. A numerous army was sent against them; they attacked the Chinese general, and defeated his forces, 1619. It was at this critical juncture, that the emperor of China invoked the help of the Portuguese, who sent a small number of soldiers to repel the Tatars. But instead of making use of their tactics, and employing them against his inveterate enemies, he sent them back to Macao. After having taken possession of the greater part of Léaou-tung, the Tatars intended to fall upon Korea; the king trembled, and gave notice to the emperor, who was in a most helpless condition himself, and died of a broken heart, in 1620.

His eldest son was his successor; ancestral name, Kwang-tsung. Scarcely had he ascended the throne, when he fell suddenly sick, and it was generally believed, that his disease arose from his great application to business. His physician advised him to take a draught of the liquor of immortality; he did so, and died shortly afterwards.

He-tsung, — Tëen-ke, — succeeded, in 1621. Great troubles agitated the empire, and were a sure sign of the decline of the Ming dynasty. The Tatars, content with the conquests they had made, for a while kept quiet, and simply stated their complaints to the Chinese government. “If your and our empires have been so long at war, the pride of the mandarins is the true cause. They consider their sovereign as even more exalted than the heavens, and think themselves far superior to all other people; whilst they despise the foreign princes whom Heaven has appointed the rulers of their respective countries. You commit the most crying injustice; but Heaven regards the justice of our cause, and has given us the power to revenge our wrongs.” This produced severe animadversions from a Chinese grandee, who viewed these barbarians and their complaints with the utmost contempt. He-tsung suffered frequently from indisposition, and died in 1627. Hwae-tsung was his successor. Very soon after his accession to the throne, the Mantchoo king advanced towards the Chinese frontier, and had the boldness to declare that Heaven had destined him to be emperor of China. Tae-tsung, their prince, had received a Chinese education; he was well versed in the politics of the court of Peking, and knew how to resist

and defeat their stratagems. He endeavoured to lull the Chinese sovereign into a state of security. The letters he sent in order to state his complaints, were generally rejected; the Chinese monarch paid no regard to their contents, because it was below his dignity to do justice to barbarians. After having exhausted all his patience, Tae-tsung declared before his generals, that, with the help of Heaven, he would procure to them a large empire: "If you serve me faithfully, you may be confident that I shall reward you with riches and honours." Sae-tung solicited by his nobles, and the Mongol chiefs, adopted finally the title of emperor in 1635; but the monarch would have repelled those insolent Tatars, if other rebellions had not disturbed the peace of the country.

Robbers, who had enriched themselves with the spoils of their countrymen, and gathered around their standards all the vagabonds of the empire, bade defiance to the imperial army. They collected their forces, and formed eight armies. To prevent war amongst themselves, they divided the empire, and every leader received a share. The most celebrated amongst them were Le and Shang. Shang took possession of Sze-chuen and Ho-kwang, whilst Le marched to the conquest of Ho-nan, and invested the capital of Kae-fung; however, he

was forced to raise the siege, but shortly afterwards returned, determined to take the city. The imperial soldiers, prompted by despair, defended the place to the last. Their sufferings from want were so great, however, that human flesh was regularly sold in the market; and it was considered an act of charity to throw the bodies of the dead into the street, that the poor people might feed upon them. But all these horrors could not prevail upon the commander to surrender the place. All resources had failed, but suddenly a Chinese army approached, sent by the emperor to their relief. Great was the joy of the beleaguered. The imperial general fearing, that he would not be able to cope with the numerous rebel army, came to the desperate resolution of drowning their whole camp. He accordingly cut through the dykes of the Hwang-ho, which secured the country from inundation. As soon as the rebels perceived their dangerous situation, they hastily fled to the mountains, whilst the whole city was covered with the waters. More than 200,000 inhabitants perished in the flood, and the whole metropolis was one heap of ruins, 1642.

Le-tsze-ching now advanced boldly, took possession of Ho-nan and Shen-se provinces, and killed all the mandarins, whilst he granted to the people a full exemption from taxes. This

gained him the affection of the populace, the imperial soldiers left their standards, and ranged under his banners, and Le no longer scrupled to proclaim himself emperor.

After so many calamities, the sovereign had grown sullen ; he was averse to governing an empire, which groaned under such great calamities as were produced by the continual wars. His soldiers were without pay, and had scarcely the necessaries of life ; misery reigned throughout the court. When the emperor heard of the approach of Le-tsze-ching to the capital, he was thrown into the utmost consternation. He had laid the whole province of Shen-se waste with fire and sword ; there remained only one city, Tae-yuen, faithful to its lawful sovereign. Le invested the place, but met with so fierce a resistance, that he almost despaired of taking it by assault. Having, however, determined upon its destruction, he advanced boldly ; the imperial party bravely defended themselves, and a dreadful carnage ensued, which very soon filled the ditches with corpses. Le was thus enabled to advance towards the walls, which he scaled. The imperial soldiers chose rather to die than to yield ; the rebels massacred them all, and afterwards set fire to the city. Regardless of the lives of his soldiers, Le sacrificed thousands before the fortresses, on his way to Peking. The army,

stationed to protect the capital, threw down their arms; the unhappy emperor silently awaited his fate. A traitorous eunuch opening the gates of the city, Le made a triumphant entrance; and when Hwae-tsung saw that he could no longer depend upon any man, he called the grandees and his family together—“All is lost,” he exclaimed, tears stood in his eyes; he could speak no farther. The empress was deeply touched, she left the apartment, embraced her three young children, kissed them fervently, and strangled herself in a private apartment. He then called his daughter, a girl of fifteen years. “Why,” said he, “are you born of such an unhappy parent?” and aiming a blow at her with his sword, he levelled her to the ground. After this, he gave orders to all his wives and concubines to kill themselves; and dressed in the imperial robes, hastened to one of the city gates, but found at it the procession of the enemy. He again returned to the palace, and called together the grandees, but nobody obeyed his summons. He was now at the point of despair, forsaken by the whole world; and went to the Wun-suy hill, where he wrote a paper, wherein he accused himself of having been the cause of so much misery, charging the grandees as his accomplices, and concluded by saying: “Take my corpse, cut it in pieces, I am

content with this, but spare my people, and do them no wrong." When he had finished writing these sentences, he took his own girdle, and strangled himself. An eunuch, who had been witness of this tragic scene, followed his example.

Thus ended the Ming dynasty. Unforeseen evils brought on its destruction. China was, on the whole, during the entire period of its continuance, in a flourishing state. The intestine wars, which agitated the country, were very few, and of short duration. Few of the princes were vicious, many of them excellent rulers, and men of first-rate qualities; but they only ruled over China Proper, and a few Tatar tribes; so that the extent of territory, was far less than under their predecessors, the Yuen dynasty.*

* See the *Ming-she*, a work in 68 volumes, where the reader will find the most accurate and minute details of the events, upon which we have merely touched.

END OF VOL. I.

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